Why Did Whitney Confess? by Robert Forsythe

NEW MASSES

MARCH 22, 1938 FIFTEEN CENTS A COPY

After Europe's Black Friday

I. *France Appraises Hitler's Coup*

By Gabriel Péri

II. *Washington Questions Isolation*

By Paul G. McManus

★

The Moscow Trial

Second Article

By Joshua Kunitz

The Trade Unions and Peace

Fourth Article in a Series

By Earl Browder

Drawings and Cartoons by William Gropper, Gardner Rea, A. Redfield and Others

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Change the World

Workers' Angels Needed for the New Masses

by MIKE GOLD

TALKING here about Moscow gold recently, I forgot to mention Hearst and the Trotzkyites are ever fond of saying our press is supported only by such gold. Remember I was reminded of it when I wandered into the New Masses office the other day, and listened to the usual sorrowful tale of deficits, printers' bills, etc. Nobody on the staff received wages for some three weeks—stenographers, editors, artists, shipping clerks. The work was clicking on cheerfully enough, but you could look outside any door and see a whole menagerie there—just wolves, wolves, licking their ugly chops.

The New Masses is an independent American paper. It receives no gold from Moscow, and never has. It has always had a pet wolf or two at the door, and so has every other radical paper in this country. Why do all our papers make those constant money drives? Does the enemy dare to say we do it for pleasure? It is done because the printers are not convinced by these tales of Moscow gold, and demand real cash.

Just as ham has eggs, a dog fleas, and every Juliet a Romeo so each radical paper has its own large floating debt. You are prevented by your principles from building circulation by the usual cheap, sensational Macfadden methods, and you meet prejudice on the part of the big advertisers.

But this is painful to editor and reader both. I have been connected with the New Masses for some fifteen years, as an editor in one form or another. During that period, I would say that more than half my time was spent in trying to raise money to meet the deficit. When a young writer comes to me and says he would like to work on the Masses some day, I always advise him to study bookkeeping and salesmanship first. The writing manages to take care of itself somehow; it is the financing that gives an editor the pip, and is his real test of ability.

I have the latest copy in my hand, and what a fine, all-around job it is! Earl Browder has the second of his articles in his series on Isolation versus Collective Security. He is a busy man, but in this series seems to have struck a new vein in expression—the writing has a wonderful polish and lucidity, in the style of the great pamphleteers.

Then Upton Sinclair has written a fine answer to Eugene Lyons on the question of the Soviet trials—an article that is a memorable piece of timely journalism. John E. Kennedy, secretary to Congressman Jerry O'Connell, explains eloquently how he, a loyal Catholic since birth, is not siding with Franco in Spain, as some of the hierarchs here are doing.

Then there is a swell piece of authoritative reporting on fascism in Mexico and an article by witty Ruth McKenney, telling Dorothy Thompson why she doesn't think that because a "man has four Packards, he is automatically a great American."

And there's a lot more—that inimitable old Liberty Boy of 1776, Robert Forsythe, takes another crack at the British throne; the artists have some good pictures; the theatre and movies and books are covered in splendid style, etc., etc. It's a million dollar issue, but not a writer or artist received a nickel, and the printer is howling for his pound of flesh!

I hope to whatever gods there be that our movement isn't going to wait until the New Masses folds up. It will be too late to wait until the New Masses folds up, however. It will be too late then to do much for it, and now, with events sharpening, with the fascist war danger growing, the Moscow trials on and every bit of defense for socialism and peace needed, the New Masses is too necessary to be allowed to quietly pass out.

But how can you persuade anyone it is on the verge? Its enemy says it is supported by Moscow gold, and its friends find it looking so healthy they believe it must have a rich uncle somewhere. What's going to happen? Is the working-class going to do something for its own "journal of opinion?" as the bourgeois angels do for theirs?

Reprinted from The Daily Worker, March 9, 1938.

BETWEEN OURSELVES

AS we go to press we have received $8855.88, from 1055 readers, towards our drive for $20,000. Some of these people have responded two and three times to our appeals. If those of our readers who have delayed sending their contribution would do so at once the drive would be over within one week, and NEW MASSES would be out of danger. Read Mike Gold's column which is reproduced on this page, then sit down and send us one dollar plus as much more as you can get your hands on—*at once.* Our address is 31 East 27th Street, New York City.

Who's Who

GABRIEL PÉRI is on the Central Committee of the French Communist Party. He is Communist spokesman on foreign affairs in the Chamber of Deputies. . . . Paul G. McManus is a Washington statistician. . . . Herbert Resner was counsel to Tom Mooney at the Sacramento hearings and has, for many years, led the Mooney-Billings defense. . . . The drawing of Tom Mooney on page 16 is from Hugo Gellert's *Capital in Lithographs.* The portrait of Karl Marx which appeared in last week's issue is from the same volume. . . . James S. Allen is the author of *Reconstruction,* recently published by International. . . . Nathaniel Buchwald is on the staff of the *Freiheit.* . . . Owen Burke is a regular dance critic for NEW MASSES.

Flashbacks

"Come, Comrades, come, your glasses clink;
Up with your hands a health to drink,
The health of all that workers be—"

Thus sang William Morris, poet, soapboxer, socialist, craftsman, whose anniversary is celebrated by the English working class this week. He was born March 24, 1834. . . . *Uncle Tom's Cabin,* the most influential propaganda written in preparation for the Second American Revolution, was published, March 20, 1852. . . . "While we were beating and stabbing Matteoti he appeared heroic," commented one of the fascist murderers of the Italian Socialist as he was being acquitted by a court, March 24, 1926. The blackshirt noted that Matteoti kept repeating, "Kill me, but the idea which is in me you can never kill." . . . Lenin's *What Is to Be Done?* was published in Stuttgart, March 20, 1902.

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NEW MASSES
MARCH 22, 1938

After Europe's Black Friday

FRANCE APPRAISES HITLER'S COUP

By Gabriel Péri

PARIS, March 14, (By Cable).

HITLER'S triple ultimatum to Schuschnigg of Austria on March 11, and the events which followed thereafter, comes as a surprise only to those who failed to understand the meaning of the previous Berchtesgaden ultimatum from Hitler to Schuschnigg on February 12. The Nazi resolution to bring Austria into line was absolutely evident from that moment on. It is true that the German rulers were disconcerted by the vigorous popular reaction to their ultimatum in Austria, a reaction which made itself felt in the steps taken toward a true national front in defense of Austrian independence. Had this movement in Austria obtained the active support of France and Great Britain, a real obstacle would have been erected in the path of the German onslaught.

It is as yet too early to know the reaction of the Austrian people as the Nazis actually crossed the border. Reliable sources, nevertheless, affirm that Hitler did not enter Vienna Saturday night, but on Monday, only because street fighting still raged in various districts of the Austrian capital.

Von Papen, the German Ambassador to Vienna until the recent shake-up in the Berlin foreign office, estimated that a free plebiscite, such as Schuschnigg had contemplated, would have given a 75 to 80 percent majority for independence. The Nazis advanced their plans in order to preclude any such decision by the people of Austria. They were encouraged in their audacity by the attitude of Italy and Britain.

For several years now, the criminal mistake of Franco-British diplomacy has consisted in believing that the solidarity of the Rome-Berlin axis can be weakened by multiplying concessions to Mussolini. Nothing of the sort. As a matter of fact, since March 1937, Italy has linked her political ambitions to those of Germany on the basis of a compromise whereby, in exchange for German freedom of action in the Danube basin, Italy obtains the Reich's support for her Mediterranean adventures. That is why Italy remained stock still after Berchtesgaden and finally approved the German action.

The French government, on its part, had proposed to Great Britain a joint protest to Berlin. This was on February 17. Three days later, former Foreign Secretary Eden, who supported the French initiative in the British cabinet, was given his walking papers by Prime Minister Chamberlain. England's Cagou*lords* did their utmost to make this possible. As an immediate result, England opened negotiations with Italy, giving Mussolini excessive advantages without any counterweights. Finally, in his declarations to the House of Commons, the Prime Minister did not hesitate to say that the small nations need not count on the support of the great powers. These declarations contributed to the decision by the Nazis to press their advantage in Austria to a conclusion, first by the triple ultimatum of March 11, then by armed conquest.

So, henceforth, Hitler will make his home in Munich, to be closer to his new subjects.

AND Germany was again able to execute a *coup de force* with Italy's complicity. The exchange of telegrams between Hitler and Mussolini, and the decisions of the Fascist Grand Council, reveal the terms of the deal between Italy and Germany. Mussolini, in exchange for the support given to Hitler in central Europe, received German aid in Spain. In fact, the Austrian affair neatly coincides with the unprecedented fierceness of the Franco offensive on the Aragon front.

Germany's objective is to obtain a quick decision in Spain in order to paralyze France at the moment, fast approaching, when the Reich will address an ultimatum to Czechoslovakia.

To succeed in this enterprise, Hitler needs a government in France willing to follow in tow of Chamberlain's foreign policy, which means a government with the Communists counted out of the majority. This is the true origin of the recent French cabinet crisis. The debates over plenary powers and financial policy were mere pretexts. The true basis was the problem of the future orientation of French foreign policy.

On the very first day of the crisis, the French Communist Party affirmed that the solution had to be sought in the formation of a government in which all the parties of the People's Front were represented. But, faced with the gravity of the foreign situation, Léon Blum, the Socialist leader, wanted to form a government of national unity around the People's Front, with representatives ranging from Maurice Thorez, the General Secretary of the Communist Party, to leaders of the moderate parties. Only foreign agents and fascists would be excluded from this government. The Communist Party gave its support in principle to the Blum proposal; it stated that it was in favor of a government, embracing all republican forces, pledged to the program desired by the majority of the electorate. The General Confederation of Labor, France's five-million-strong labor union, and the Radical Socialist Party likewise favored the plan.

Clearly the presence of Communists in such a government would have strengthened French democracy. Hence, Léon Blum's effort was opposed most bitterly by all those whose policy favors the weakening of France and capitulation before Hitler. In the Chamber of Deputies, the drive against Blum's initiative was led by Flandin, known for his ties with the Nazi leaders. Flandin, however, is only a mouthpiece. The real leader of the offensive was the steel magnate, De Wendel, who has supplied such huge quantities of iron ore for German armaments. With the collaboration of the pro-Nazi *Comité France-Allemagne,* with its Cagoulards leaders, this potentate of high finance torpedoed the Blum proposal.

After this setback, Blum, instead of trying to form a government in the image of the People's Front, as the Communists counseled, preferred to form a cabinet similar to that of June, 1936, with sixteen Socialists, fifteen Radical Socialists, and three independent Socialists.

THIS new government is especially noteworthy for the following:

1. Blum has taken over the Finance Ministry as well as the Premiership.

2. Marx Dormoy, the Socialist, is again Minister of the Interior.

3. A firm Radical Socialist, Marc Rucart, has been appointed Minister of Justice, which seems to indicate that the Cagoulard conspiracy will not be allowed to drop.

4. Most important, Delbos and Chautemps, whose capitulatory foreign policy have done

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so much harm, are eliminated. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is now in the hands of Joseph Paul-Boncour, who has voiced many protests against the policy of concessions to fascism in recent months. The appointment of Paul-Boncour has been warmly welcomed by all friends of peace.

Thus, although it is to be regretted that France does not yet have the government desired by the people—with Communist participation—it must be noted that another maneuver designed to eliminate the Communists from the majority has come to nothing. The Communists remain an indispensable element of the majority and the change in the Foreign Ministry indicates a desire to put an end to the see-saw policy.

We must rejoice at this double accomplishment. It marks another setback to the effort of international fascism in the political life of France.

WASHINGTON QUESTIONS ISOLATION

By Paul G. McManus

WASHINGTON.

EUROPE proceeds from crisis to crisis with a speed the editorial commentator cannot match. These words, written on Sunday, may by the end of the week be read in a new and different context of events. Today Hitler is in Austria, the Rome-Berlin axis stands, and Chamberlain is revealed before England and the world as the "realist" who in the name of "peace" has brought Europe to the brink of war. France has just formed a new government, the reaction of the British people to the national government's betrayal of their interests is obscured by a "free" press, and the United States officially remains aloof.

The need for a reorientation of American foreign policy has never been so apparent. What is happening here? What do our people think? Has the increasing danger of war swelled the tide of isolationist sentiment, or is support of the President's Chicago policy increasing?

In Washington it is possible to answer these questions with a new appraisal of the effects of the Chicago speech. The seeds sown by the President in October have been germinating. Much has happened to force their growth. In hundreds of meetings, in thousands of discussions, the choking weeds of isolationist sentiment have been partly cleared away. In the minds of millions of Americans the slow process of maturation has gone on, nurtured by the logic of events, incalculable until the time of sprouting came.

That time is here. In Washington, a bumper crop of resolutions calling for concerted action against war is now being harvested from the Chicago planting. Mass organizations and trade unions (note the Ohio convention of the C.I.O.), small meetings and large ones, individuals and groups representing the broadest strata of the people, are becoming articulate.

In contrast, isolationism on Capitol Hill has already passed full bloom. The international weather does not favor a quick second blooming. The "peace" societies put forward all they've got at the naval appropriation hearings. It was not so good a show as the press made it appear. They had nothing better to suggest than total disarmament, both military and diplomatic. In the face of a very real war danger a growing number of congressmen reject such an absurdity. They do not understand the isolationist who would strip America of defenses and simultaneously forbid her friendship with other peacefully inclined nations. Not many people want to be hermits in No Man's Land.

So isolation is steadily losing ground to concerted action; no new converts are closing the gaps in the ranks left by deserters from peace-by-wishing.

How do we know? The mail of Congressmen who have led the fight to amend the present "Neutrality" Act presents abundant evidence. Daily, endorsements of the O'Connell Peace Bill, and of the Biermann, Scott and Lewis resolutions, pour into Washington. Support for the petition for hearings on these measures is rolling up. Once-confirmed isolationists in Congress, feeling the pressure, begin to waver. Many are already in favor of the hearings, seeing in them the opportunity to clarify their own doubts.

The swing to concerted action is by no means complete. The week brought one interesting example of new confusion in the isolationist camp.

Representative Louis Ludlow, author of the Ludlow Amendment, introduced in the House a new resolution calling for "Peace by Conference." This resolution calls for a "naval holiday," a naval disarmament conference. A similar resolution already has been introduced in the Senate by Senator King of Utah and in the House by Representative Maverick. But the Ludlow resolution is a step in advance of the King-Maverick proposal. The latter is a purely Utopian demand for disarmament, without any recognition of the fact that the conditions necessary to make disarmament possible do not exist. Representative Ludlow would not confine his conference purely to disarmament discussions, but includes also "other questions associated with and promotive of international accord." This is at least a half-step forward. But Mr. Ludlow is still putting the cart before the horse. He wants disarmament first and organized peace afterwards. He does not yet see clearly that the fascist war-makers must be checked. They are responsible for the armament race which threatens to drag every country into war. He does not see that it is the gangsters, not the police, who threaten world peace.

But Mr. Ludlow has made progress. He even indirectly exposes the weakness of the Ludlow amendment for which he has fought so long. In the speech introducing his resolution he said, "The time to act is before we reach the brink of war, for then it is too late." And he no longer tells us to "mind our own business" and "keep out of the European mess." Instead he says:

> "All that is needed is the leadership which America, of all nations on earth, is most able to furnish. If America seizes its opportunity in this fateful period of the world's history and assumes the leadership in bringing about a naval holiday and a peace conference, it will find, I believe, a responsive attitude not only at home but throughout the entire war-ridden world."

America must assume the leadership, Mr. Ludlow, not in calling a Utopian disarmament conference, but in organizing the democratic nations of the world in defense of peace. When that has been done, and only then, the objective conditions for a successful disarmament conference will exist. But something blocks the way to American leadership of, or even American participation in, concerted action for peace. That is the present "Neutrality" Act, a fetter on the foreign policy more recently enunciated by the President. Now, when millions of Americans actively support that policy, and millions more, like Mr. Ludlow, stand confused and wavering, that act must be amended, clearing the way for concerted action and the quarantine of aggressors.

Several months ago, amendment of the Neutrality Act seemed an almost hopeless task. Today it is possible to undertake it. Both the administration and a growing number of important legislators know this. They are waiting only for the assurance of wide popular support before they take decisive action.

That is why the House Foreign Affairs Committee is no longer entirely deaf to demands that it hold hearings on the Lewis, Scott, Biermann and O'Connell resolutions. As the demand for hearings increases, the willingness of the Foreign Affairs Committee to accede becomes more apparent.

Only open and public hearings on the Biermann, Scott, O'Connell and Lewis resolutions will permit the people who advocate concerted action to become articulate and will measure the relative weight of their opinion throughout the country. Those people now represent every section of America. Their common interest in peace cuts across all class and political lines. *They must be heard.*

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The Trade Unions and Peace

CONCERTED ACTION OR ISOLATION: WHICH IS THE PATH TO PEACE?

By Earl Browder

NOWHERE is the national debate on concerted action versus isolation being conducted more seriously than in the trade unions. And nowhere will the results be more important, for the trade union movement is the backbone of the democratic camp against fascism and war. There is no possibility for a determined course of concerted action without the wholehearted backing of the organized working class.

It is therefore highly important to know what are the currents of trade union thought arising out of the great debate now going on.

So late as a year ago, the trade union movement in its large majority was dominated by isolationist moods and ideas, and in general tended to ignore world affairs. In this it was but continuing uncritically the course adopted after the disillusionment of the first post-war period out of which arose the whole isolationist tendency.

With the sharpening of the war danger, however, the trade unions have followed the general trend to re-evaluate the whole question. The trend of their debates on the question has been in the direction, more and more, of taking up the position of concerted action and rejecting isolation. This is in accord with the historic tendency of organized labor away from narrow nationalism and toward internationalism.

It cannot be said that the trade unions stand in the vanguard of the movement for a peace policy based on concerted action, taking the labor movement as a whole. But some sections of the labor movement are standing in the forefront.

First of all, should be considered the trade unions which are connected with the American League for Peace and Democracy (formerly the American League Against War and Fascism). In its Third Congress, in the beginning of 1936, the League had representation of unions combining about 650,000 members; at the Fourth Congress, in November 1937, the representation rose to over 1,600,000, while additional unions not represented but endorsing the League's program brought the total to well over 2,000,000. This is 25 to 30 percent of the organized labor movement.

More significant than the rise in numbers, however, is the change in political outlook. At the 1936 congress, the trade unions shared the isolationist moods which caused that congress to adopt a program which straddled the issue of concerted action versus isolation. But in the 1937 congress, the trade unions were in the forefront of the great swing in sentiment which placed the American League squarely upon the side of concerted action.

Upon the issue of peace policy, there is not discernible any clear differentiation between the two main centers of trade unionism, the A. F. of L. and the C.I.O., their differences being mainly in their modes of expressing themselves. The A. F. of L. discourages expression from its lower bodies, and tries to concentrate its pronouncements on peace in the higher officials, while the C.I.O. shies away from taking a position in its higher councils, but grants full freedom of expression in its lower and constituent bodies. The result is that, with the current being toward concerted action for peace in both main branches of the movement, this is shown by the C.I.O. unions mainly through their industrial and local branches, while in the A. F. of L. it is in the main through the expressions of the leaders.

However deep may be the discrepancy between the views of members and leaders of the A. F. of L. on many questions, there is no reason to doubt that on the issue of peace policy the dominant trend was expressed by William Green, in the *American Federationist* for February 1938. Precisely because we of the Communist Party are in sharp collision with Mr. Green on other questions, it becomes all the more necessary to register an important degree of approval of his expressions on this question of peace. The following quotations, taken from William Green's editorial, are fundamentally correct and become of high significance because they represent the views of the main body of the more conservative camp of trade unionism. Mr. Green said:

> When the first European country initiated a war of aggression to extend its territories, no concerted effort was made to maintain the integrity of the nation attacked and to maintain respect for international peace and law. Under protection of this international situation Japan made her first raid on China. . . . As a consequence Europe lives in fear of the shot that will proclaim general war. Since the life of the civilized world is organized on a world basis, it is practically impossible for any nation to live within itself, and no nation can escape becoming involved in a general war. The only way to protection against irresponsible nations and to world peace is to set up international agencies for adjusting our common problems and for enforcing the peace of the world. In other words, we must extend to international relations political organization that will reclaim this area from anarchy and conflict.
>
> The majority of the citizens of the United States deeply resent the action of Japan in making an unprovoked invasion of China and waging war upon her civilian population, threatening to destroy one of the oldest civilizations. We condemn such action as do many other countries, but only concerted action can make Japan feel the effects of our disapproval. The A. F. of L. has urged its membership to boycott the manufactured goods of Japan. While that action has been effective, we realize that only a general boycott can bring the desired economic pressure on Japan. We realize that unless the democratically governed people stand together refusing to sell arms and munitions or to make loans to any country violating international peace and law, the other countries whose interests lie in aggression and arbitrary rule, will make common cause with Japan, and protests of individual countries will be useless.

The central core of Mr. Green's argumentation, namely, the indivisibility of peace and the necessity for concerted action to maintain it, is sound and incontrovertible, notwithstanding that some formulations reveal reactionary prejudices and nationalist preconceptions. In practice, of course, Mr. Green and his associates do not carry out this line. They are opposing international trade union unity, they betray republican Spain, they stultify their boycott activities against Japan by placing it under the Hearstian slogan of "Buy only American goods." Yet it is certainly a fact to be welcomed that the American Federation of Labor is predominantly on the side of concerted action for peace. We can only applaud the main thought expressed by Mr. Green, and demand that the A. F. of L. apply it in life.

The Atlantic City conference of the unions of the Committee for Industrial Organization, held in October 1937, like the A. F. of L. convention in Denver at that time, adopted a decision for boycott of Japanese goods. It did not, however, adopt a general peace policy.

The first and clearest declaration of policy, from the C.I.O. unions, came from the convention of the National Maritime Union last summer. It declared for embargo against aggressor governments, help to their victims, and concerted action among the peace-loving and treaty-maintaining peoples. This clear-headed and well-formulated resolution was a model of working-class internationalism. It is no accident that it could be unanimously adopted by precisely this union, ahead of the whole labor movement, because the seamen, from the very nature of their work and life, are compelled to think hard and deep and realistically on all questions of war and peace.

In the United Mine Workers' convention, held last December, we had the expression of the largest and most influential union of the C.I.O. The resolution adopted was noteworthy, on its positive side, for its forthright condemnation of Germany, Italy, and Japan as aggressors making war "to impose their vicious principles" upon democratic and weaker nations, and for its resolute endorsement of the boycott of Japanese goods. It was further noteworthy for its decisive rejection of all the nostrums of isolationism, and for the emphatic rejection of an attempt to amend the resolu-

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tion to include a condemnation of Communism. Thus the United Mine Workers took decisive steps away from isolationism, and avoided the fascist trap of the anti-Communist alliance, although it failed to give positive expression to a rounded-out program for concerted action.

The Ohio State Convention of the C.I.O. unions, held in February this year, representing 250,000 members, adopted a resolution repeating the decisive sections of the Mine Workers' resolution, but adding, significantly, endorsement of the O'Connell Peace Bill (H. R. 527) which provides for embargo of the aggressors and help to their victims.

About the same time, the Labor Legislative Conference of Western Pennsylvania, representing several hundred thousand members, took President Roosevelt's Chicago speech proposing quarantine of the fascist governments as the central point for its resolution unanimously adopted. This brief resolution, remarkable for the conciseness with which it declares for a policy of concerted action, is worth quoting in full:

> The people of the world are face to face with a new world war with all its devastation, bloodshed and death. The war-mad fascists, Hitler, Mussolini and the Mikado threaten civilization and the peace of all humanity. From this war there will be no escape unless we protest and vigorously oppose this threatening war menace.
>
> The American people being opposed to war and desirous to maintain peace must add their support to the efforts of all peace-loving people throughout the world to maintain peace and save itslf and all humanity from destruction. Therefore be it
>
> Resolved: That this Social and Labor Conference declares its opposition to the war plans of the fascist war aggressors and pledges to support the peace policies of our President for coöperation with the people of all nations for the maintenance of peace and against fascist war aggression.

Such expressions as we have noted above are typical of the American labor movement's trend of thought in the national debate now going on. They show a tremendous movement to break away from isolationism, and to find the path to peace in concerted international action in which the United States should take a leading role commensurate with our position in the world.

One important exception to this trend must be noted in the leadership of the Auto Workers' Union, mainly expressed by its president, Homer Martin. In the past few months Mr. Martin has stepped forward as a national leader of the isolationist camp, in fact almost its only important trade-union figure. He appeared recently at a New York meeting of the isolationist "united front," which its chairman, Mr. Villard, announced had been organized by "the tireless energy of Mr. Bertram Wolfe," another of the speakers. Mr. Wolfe, it so happens, is a "tireless" member of the Lovestone group, closely associated internationally with the Bukharin-Brandler group exposed as agents of the fascist governments actively engaged in inciting and preparing war. Mr. Martin, who seems to be particularly ignorant on international questions, takes his policy predigested from his close associate Lovestone, and openly demands complete acceptance of the demands of Japanese imperialism by the United States government. His isolationist shouting is handy, at this moment, to obscure the unfortunate position in which his policies, under the guidance of Lovestone, have placed the auto union in relation to the labor-hating auto corporations.

The exceptional position of Mr. Martin among labor leaders, as an extreme isolationist, can hardly be taken as an expression of the real trend of thought among the broad mass of auto workers. The auto workers, like the miners, steel workers, and others who adopted the clear-cut decisions for concerted action in Ohio and Pennsylvania, are unquestionably breaking away from isolationism. If they had an opportunity to make a choice by ballot, between President Roosevelt's Chicago speech of last October, and Mr. Martin's recent New York speech, there is not the slightest doubt that they would support Roosevelt against Martin by an overwhelming majority.

Closely connected with the trade unions are such mass political movements as the Minnesota Farmer-Labor Party which controls the state administration, and the Washington Commonwealth Federation which is a rising political power in its state. Both these great organizations are definitely on record for concerted action for peace and against isolationism.

Summing up, we can say on the basis of the evidence that the trade union movement as a whole, both A. F. of L. and C.I.O., is rapidly breaking away from the isolationist moods and ideas which dominated it for many years. It is, with various degrees of clarity, already adopting the basic principles of a program of concerted action of all peace-loving peoples to restrain the warmakers. It will certainly, in the not distant future, become the most solid, consistent, and determined fighter to realize in life, in the practical actions of the United States government, the principles of collective security.

Earl Browder's fifth article will appear next week.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

THERE have been but a few questions from readers in response to our invitation. Most of them have been fundamental questions so directly involved in the central arguments, that the main articles must stand as my answer to them. But from a long letter from D. W. C. Jr. I cull the following, which can best be answered in this questions and answers section:

Q. Is it not possible to agree with you thoroughly on the aim of collective security, and yet to have strong doubts as to whether collective security will achieve that aim?

A. Yes, undoubtedly, and the great mass of supporters for concerted action have but recently passed through those doubts, and many more are only now in process of overcoming their doubts. Precisely that fact is what makes the national debate now going on of such supreme importance. Most people who hold to isolationist views are not conscious that these views lead to surrender to fascism; most of them are not conscious, also, that the active agents of fascism in America are the most zealous ideologists of isolationism. When we expose these roots and consequences of isolationism, we are by no means imputing a desire to help fascism or promote war to all those who are influenced by these ideas.

Q. Granted that effective concerted action would gain the results hoped for, is it not possible to doubt the possibility of securing such concerted action?

A. Yes, it is always possible to doubt, and the right to do so (at least in secret) is a right which even a fascist regime could not fully deprive one of. But such doubt, persisted in to the point of paralyzing action, on the part of enough people, could itself become the factor defeating the realizable program. Since concerted action is the only way proposed by anyone for maintaining world peace, the only question involved, in the final analysis, is whether it is worth while to fight for world peace with all the forces that can be united, whatever they may be. The isolationists frankly abandon the goal of maintaining peace, they accept the war as inevitable; they only hold out the illusory hope that, if we do not fight for peace, we may be allowed to stay out of the world war—at least for a short time!

Q. Assuming that the fascist powers are restrained, and do not answer their quarantine by general war as a last desperate measure, would this not refute the Marxian prediction that capitalism in its death agonies is impelled to more and more desperate acts of self-preservation?

A. No, successful curbing of the fascist warmakers would in no sense be a refutation of any conclusion of Marxism; on the contrary, it would be a supreme illustration of the truths of Marxism. Such a struggle, especially clearly if successful, would finally expose monopoly capital in every land, and all the reactionary forces under its leadership, as the force making for fascism and war, for the destruction of all civilization, for the betrayal of each nation from within to promote its own selfish interests, and would pose the necessity of Socialism, the central point of Marxian thought, with full sharpness and clarity before the great masses of every land, especially of the industrialized countries. And precisely this, the taking control of their own destinies by the masses of the people, led by the industrial working class, is the conclusion and crowning point of Marxism; what better example could be given of this than to sucessfully bring the fascists to a halt?

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William Gropper

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NEW MASSES

ESTABLISHED 1911

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A Fateful Week

WORLD peace has barely staggered through another fateful week. The seriousness of the situation can scarcely be exaggerated. Prime Minister Chamberlain's speech before the House of Commons on March 14 confirmed in detail what had previously been reported. Schuschnigg resigned only after Hitler had twice confronted him with ultimatums, one delivered by the Austrian Nazis, Seyss-Inquart, and Glaise-Horstenau, the other rushed from Berlin by airplane. To these ultimatums were attached time-limits of but a few hours, grimly reminiscent of the ultimatum sent by Austria-Hungary to Serbia on the eve of the World War.

Chamberlain's speech was a sickly effort by a guilty man to deny responsibility for the tragedy of Austria. His assertion that Britain recognized no commitment to take action respecting Austria and his failure to promise action should Hitler repeat his coup against Czechoslovakia speak for themselves. The primary responsibility for the failure to resist Hitler's coup rests upon the British tories.

But resistance to fascist aggression must and does grow! There can no longer be any doubt that Hitler means to plunge Europe and the world into war. The United States is directly threatened by the activities of the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo axis, by the agents of Berlin in America, and by Japan in the Far East. France has now strengthened its cabinet. There are many indications that Washington is reconsidering the suicidal, ruinous policy of isolation. In such developments lie the hopes for our safety, our peace, and our democracy.

Why Franco Attacks

FRANCO's new Aragon offensive, as Gabriel Péri explains elsewhere in this issue, is the other side of the Austrian coin. Everything about this offensive ties up with the general European crisis. The insurgents are striking with every resource they possess because a quick victory in Spain is the desperate need of Italian fascism. This is how the main factors inter-relate:

1. Mussolini, seriously weakened by a still unproductive conquest of Ethiopia and past intervention in Spain, was no longer able to repeat his ultimatum of 1934 to Germany by which he prevented *anschluss* after the Dollfuss assassination. But he did not surrender Austria without a price. That price was German reinforcement in Spain. The government forces in Spain have resisted fiercely but were forced to give ground in the face of fascist superiority in planes, tanks and munitions. The deal over Austria gave Franco that superiority.

2. This enormous increase in Italo-German intervention in Spain coincided, by design, with negotiations between Italy and Britain for the withdrawal of "volunteers" from Spain. Without tory assistance, neither *anschluss* nor Franco's offensive would have been possible.

3. Hitler's allies in France precipitated the French cabinet crisis just before the final ultimatum to Schuschnigg. This, in turn, was preceded by Chamberlain's refusal to send a Franco-British protest to Germany over Austria. Again the role of Britain, and the tie-up between Austria and Spain, is evident.

It is problematic how long Franco will be able to sustain the present intensity of his drive. Once before, at Guadalajara, he tried the same thing, though on a lesser scale, and failed. In addition, France, under the second Blum government, is likely to pursue a far more independent, that is, anti-fascist policy than before. For the immediate future, upon these considerations rest the peace of Europe in general and the safety of Czechoslovakia in particular.

The Tories and the T.V.A.

OUT of the maze of charges and countercharges, rumors and whispers surrounding the T.V.A., one fact emerges clearly: the tories of both major parties are gunning for T.V.A. And their campaign against T.V.A. is an integral part of the drive against the whole New Deal program, an advance skirmish in the battle of the 1938 elections.

We do not profess to know all that lies behind the differences between Dr. Arthur E. Morgan, chairman of the T.V.A. board, and his two co-directors, Dr. Harcourt A. Morgan and David E. Lilienthal. But whatever justification there may have originally been for the position he has taken, it is certain that Dr. A. E. Morgan has now permitted himself to become the mouthpiece for the bi-partisan Tory cabal that are out to destroy T.V.A. and the projected plan for seven regional T.V.A.'s because they cut into the profits of the private utility companies. And Morgan's defiant and contemptuous attitude at the hearing before President Roosevelt last Friday lends weight to the assumption that behind him stand powerful and sinister forces.

Under the circumstances the move for a congressional investigation is highly suspect, to say the least. Plugging for it are such people as Republican Senator Bridges of New Hampshire, who, together with Senator King of Utah, right-wing Democrat, has introduced a resolution for an investigation, and Representative Snell, Republican leader in the House. The United States Chamber of Commerce, in a statement giving its blessing to the proposed inquisition, indicates the broad target big business is aiming at when it declares that the investigation will shed light "upon the question of national policy raised by the nature of these undertakings."

If a congressional investigation is to be held, its character and the composition of the committee must be such as to provide guarantees that the dice will not be loaded against the American people.

Isaacs Stands Firm

THE case of New York reaction vs. Borough President Stanley M. Isaacs lost one important decision and suffered an added setback last week. Governor Lehman's rejection of the petition to remove Mr. Isaacs because he appointed Simon Gerson to the position of confidential examiner was based on the legality of the appointment and the legality of the Communist Party, of which Gerson is a member. Though Gerson's ability was never challenged, his appointment was utilized as an excuse to attack officials elected on the American Labor Party ticket. It was Mr. Isaacs' belief that democratic traditions should be honored in practice as well as in pre-election orations. Because such heresy is particularly abhorrent to Tammany and Republican heelers, they singled out Mr. Isaacs as a target for Red-baiting which they immediately extended to include all the progressives within the administration. In the forefront of this campaign has been the so-called, and falsely called, liberal Scripps-Howard *World-Telegram.*

Thus the presentation of a travelogue on the Soviet Union by the municipally-owned radio station WNYC caused Tammany Councilman Keegan to demand an "investigation" of the station which he hoped would embarrass Mayor LaGuardia and other administration liberals. The investigation can "uncover" only the following facts: the

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broadcast was one of a series of travelogues on many European countries; it contained no political references; similar travelogues have been given from time to time in the past without being questioned.

Borough President Isaacs refused to allow attacks from the right to disturb him. While his enemies were busy with denunciations, he announced a plan whereby employees of the Municipal Civil Service Commission shall nominate and elect a personnel service rating board. The rating of employees, demanded by the Commission, will henceforth be made by a board elected by and from those to be rated. Mr. Isaacs continues to show that he believes in his campaign pledges to serve the people and has the courage to carry these pledges into action.

Art and Politics Mix

THE Academy of Motion Picture Arts and Sciences delivered a salvo last week right in the face of the art-and-politics-don't-mix boys. The Academy, on the basis of a ballot, awarded the palm for the year's best production and screen play to *The Life of Emile Zola,* which drew its drama from the activities of a political rebel. And as if that were not enough, the award for the outstanding work by an actress went for the second year in succession to Luise Rainer, whose outspoken support of the peoples of Spain and China is public knowledge. It would appear that the official artistic authority in the screen industry has recognized first, that politics can be the subject matter for great art, and second, that interest in politics in no way clashes with great artistry.

Revolt in Texas

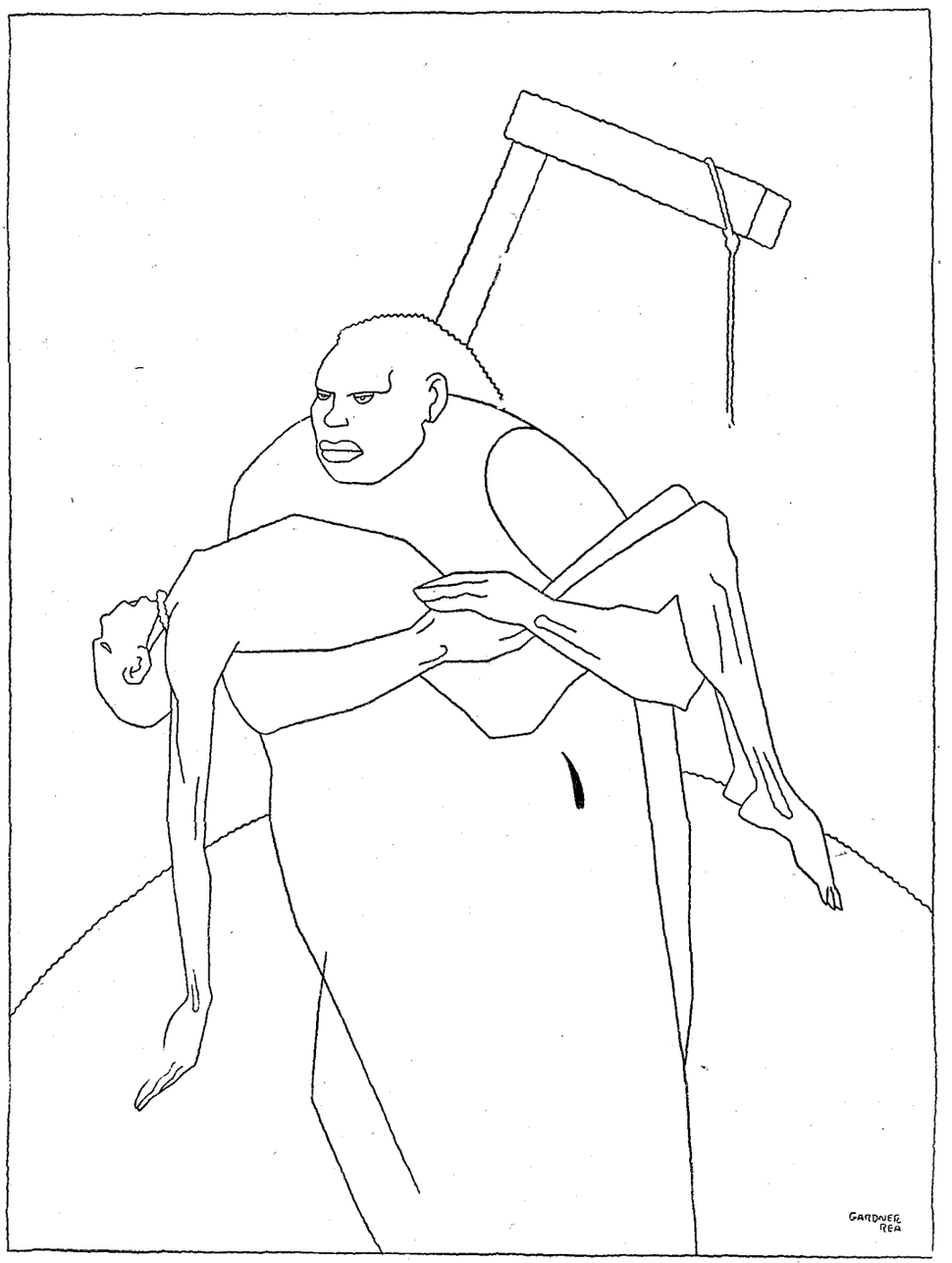
MEN and women who shell pecans in San Antonio work from sixty to eighty hours a week. Their pay averaged $2.20 a week until the owners announced that such high wages ate into profits and henceforth the rate would be 20 percent lower. Twelve thousand pecan shellers struck—most of them women. And after facing tear gas attacks for seven weeks, after constant attempts to intimidate them by denying strikers the right to picket, by mass arrests and threats of concentration camps, the strike was won and the union's ranks were swelled from the original fifty to over ten thousand members.

The written agreement ending the strike recognized the union as sole bargaining agent where the union has a majority, and provided for dropping all court charges against the strikers. Rehiring was to proceed without discrimination. The important question of wages was left to an arbitration board. The fact that before the wage cut pecan workers received $2.20 a week points the need for a strong national wages and hours law. Until such legislation is passed, the union offers hope. The revolt in Texas proved once again that no intensity of oppression can kill the will to struggle of the working class.

Seattle and Pennsylvania

PROGRESSIVES in Seattle were strong enough to defeat former Mayor John Dore, candidate of Dave Beck, corrupt A. F. of L. czar of the Teamsters' Union. They were not sufficiently unified to prevent Beck from splitting the labor and progressive vote and thereby defeating their candidate, Victor Meyers. On the eve of the election, Beck's lieutenants in the Central Labor Council called for the defeat of Meyers along with all other candidates of the Commonwealth Federation. And immediately the right-wing leaders of the state Democratic Party announced their "unofficial" opposition to Meyers.

As a result, Arthur B. Langlie, of the anti-New Deal New Order of Cincinnatus, became mayor. Though Langlie had pledged himself, for the purposes of the campaign, to uphold the Wagner Act and to remain "impartial" in labor disputes, the reactionaries were too violent in their joy at his success to allow much confidence to be placed in Langlie's watery veneer of liberalism. In fact, Governor Clarence Martin took Lang-



Gardner Rea

Death by Filibuster

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lie's victory as an excuse to call for lower taxes on the wealthy and to urge the voters to oust the Commonwealth Federation bloc from the state legislature. "At least send no-good Republicans," said the Governor. "They are better than no-good Democrats" —Martin's term for New Dealers.

Seattle emphasized the lesson that without broad support, the progressives are severely handicapped. If by November, when state elections take place, labor has united its forces and has built a democratic front including all progressives, it can prevent the reactionaries from sweeping into office. This lesson of the necessity of broadening the democratic base is stressed in Labor's Non-Partisan League's newly issued handbook on how to organize and conduct a political campaign. "Experience has shown that Labor's effectiveness in politics is injured when it pitches its campaign on too narrow a note . . . it must have support from other elements in the population." And it is the resolve to learn from the Seattle setback that motivates the drive in Pennsylvania to unite all labor behind the widest progressive front to elect Thomas Kennedy governor of Pennsylvania.

The Editorial Jitters

THE NATION and *New Republic* were compelled to execute so many shifts and about-faces in regard to the two previous Soviet treason trials that one might have expected them to show a little more caution—and humility—concerning the latest trial. Only if one understands the full implications of the building of Socialism in one country in the teeth of a hostile encircling capitalist world, and only if one knows the real political history of the individuals on trial, is it possible to grasp the inexorable logic that led to the degeneration of the Trotsky-Zinoviev-Bukharin groups into a band of traitors and spies in the service of the fascist counter-revolution. But when *The Nation* and *New Republic* see mirrored in their own doubts and confusions the image of Soviet reality and offer their own particular brand of panic and fright as a program for all thinking Americans, it is time to call them to account.

The editorial in last week's *Nation* entitled "Russian Tragedy, Act III" (tragedy for whom?) is a long wail of panic, panic, panic. "One can hear the cracking of liberal hopes; of the dream of anti-fascist unity; of a whole system of revolutionary philosophy," sobs *The Nation*.

An ordinary thinking American, reading the testimony of the Moscow trials, might be disposed to conclude that the exposure and conviction of self-confessed fascist spies means the cracking of Hitler's hopes and the Mikado's dreams, at least as far as gaining their ends through Messrs. Bukharin, Rykov and Co. is concerned. But our friends of *The Nation* are in a state of mind where everything appears in reverse. And the hysterical Oswald Garrison Villard, who recently won new service stripes in the cause of "liberalism" by attacking the C.I.O. and the National Labor Relations Board and praising Father Coughlin, shrieks about "a wave of hysteria sweeping over Moscow like that which led to the witch trials in New England." But the office of *The Nation* is, after all, not Moscow.

The Nation speaks of "the final demoralization of the whole government apparatus" —and Hitler wishes that it only were true. *The Nation* concedes that the Soviet government could not have survived civil war and foreign intervention and built Socialism "if it had refused to use force against its enemies." But in the next breath it says: "Repression came to be identified with justice; opposition with treason. And presently treason became the only possible expression of opposition." Are Hitler and the Mikado gentler in their designs on the Soviet Union than were the allied interventionists? Are the crimes of Trotsky, Tukhachevsky, and Bukharin less treasonable than those of Kolchak, Denikin, and the white guard emigrés? Was the murderer of Kirov, the member of the Zinoviev-Kamenev group, Nikolayev, less an enemy of the Soviet people than the Social-Revolutionist, Fanny Kaplan, who attempted to assassinate Lenin?

Yet after this medley of confusion and contradiction, *The Nation* writes:

> What remains? *One hears no rumors of internal unrest in the Soviet Union,* despite the political cannibalism of its ruling group. *The solid material achievements of the revolution still stand. So do the need and desire of the Soviet government for peace, and its opposition to fascist aggression, East and West.* (Our emphasis.)

But why do the material achievements of the Soviet Union still stand? Why is the Soviet Union the bulwark of peace the world over? Isn't it the result of those very policies which *The Nation* has condemned as "repression" and "dictatorship"—the policies of the Communist Party headed by Stalin? Would these material achievements still be standing had the Trotskyist and Bukharinist traitors and spies been given a free hand?

No less contradictory and absurd are the arguments of the *New Republic* editorial, "Moscow Loses Caste." It seems to us that whatever caste has been lost in connection with the Moscow trials has been lost much closer home. The *New Republic* has not yet apologized to its readers for the article by H. N. Brailsford in its July 28, 1937, issue, which presented a hare-brained Hearstian fantasy in the form of a non-existent Stalin memorandum as an explanation of the trials —an explanation which, by Mr. Brailsford's own admission, has been completely shattered by the latest trial. The *New Republic* utilizes the present trial to draw its own isolationist moral, declaring that "the trials and purges have of course disrupted and disheartened the movements on the left; but more than that, they have sent a chill over every suggestion of faith in, and coöperation with, the Stalin regime"—a consummation that Hitler devoutly wishes for. And *The Nation,* too, speaks of the "acute danger of a split between Socialists and Communists in France, a split that would doom the united front and lead to ends one scarcely dares to contemplate."

Things would certainly be in a desperate way if these dire predictions were true. But Léon Blum's new cabinet, far from representing a disruption of the People's Front, is to the left of its predecessor. As for the outlook for collective peace action to halt the fascist aggressors, our dispatches in this issue from Paris and Washington indicate that it can hardly be called worse at the end of the Moscow trial than at the beginning.

The attitude of *The Nation* and the *New Republic* toward developments in the Soviet Union is, of course, nothing new. For more than twenty years these two organs of liberal opinion have viewed with alarm every important step that the Soviet government has taken to strengthen Socialism and weaken Socialism's enemies. The Soviet Union has survived the fears and vacillations of its liberal friends, as it has the conspiracies of its enemies. But today the confusions of *The Nation* and the *New Republic* have far more serious implications than in the past. Fascist aggression in Central Europe, China and Spain, threatening the peace of the United States and the world, imposes a heavy responsibility on those who sow confusion where clarity is needed, and doubt where faith is indispensable—faith in the Soviet Union and in the people's front movement in all countries—if mankind is to be saved from catastrophe.

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FORSYTHE'S PAGE

Why Did Whitney Confess?

THE young man who reads the papers too much came in to see me. It was apparent that his mind was not at ease. He fixed me with a hard glance and started in before I could extend the greetings of the day.

"How do you explain the Whitney case?" he demanded.

"What Whitney case?" I said, stalling.

"You know very well what Whitney case. The Richard Whitney bankruptcy case."

"Well, what do you mean—how do I explain it?" I said. "He lifted some bonds that didn't belong to him, and they caught him at it."

"And that's all it means to you?" he persisted balefully.

"That's every damned thing in the world it means to me," I said, getting sore. "What else could it mean?"

He looked at me pityingly.

"Don't be naïve, Forsythe," he said. "You know better than that. You know things don't happen in that kindergarten way."

"The man takes bonds that don't belong to him and they catch him at it and his firm goes blooey. What's so mysterious about that?"

He looked at me as if I were slightly touched.

"Richard Whitney—the best known figure on Wall Street. Ex-President of the Stock Exchange. An old conservative. And he fails for a measly $611,000. Do you want me to believe a cock-and-bull story like that?"

"It was more than $611,000," I said lamely. "A lot of other things added up."

"A measly six hundred and eleven thousand bucks," he persisted. "And the biggest name on Wall Street."

"Listen," I said. "If you have anything on your mind, come out with it. Don't make a fool of me."

He narrowed his eyes and looked at me slowly.

"Did it ever occur to you that there might be something behind a nonsense fable like that?"

I ignored him, but nothing ever stops a fellow with his temperament.

"Do you happen to remember," he went on, "that Richard Whitney was one of the bitterest opponents of the New Deal?"

"Is that any reason why he should start stealing bonds!" I yelled.

"He steals the bonds or he *confesses* to stealing the bonds," said my so-called friend suavely.

"Well, why shouldn't he confess if he stole them and they had the goods on him!" I cried.

"With the best lawyers in New York at his command and he comes out even before the trial and confesses?" he asked, and looked at me again as if insanity were sticking out all over me. "It doesn't happen to be human nature, my boy. Maybe in Russia . . ." He dragged that out suggestively. "Maybe in Rush-huh, my boy, but not in these little old United States. It isn't human nature, and you can't get away from human nature."

"But if he was guilty . . .!" I screamed.

"Ah-h, guilty; yes. That would be another matter."

"If he isn't guilty, why in the name of God would he say he was guilty!" I cried.

"That's just the point," said my friend, smoothly cool. "That-is-just-the-point . . ."

At this juncture my excitement cooled and I began to look at *him* with a fishy eye.

"Oh, I begin to get it now," I said bitterly. "It's a plot. He's been framed. The G.P.U. is in it somewhere."

"Not the G.P.U.," he said maddeningly. "Not the G.P.U. this time. . . . Something much more powerful." He was now drawling his words like Sherlock Holmes.

"It's the Roosevelt administration," I said. "And they're making a spectacle of Whitney to divert the public's attention from worse troubles."

"You *are* catching on, aren't you?" he said easily.

"And Whitney is only confessing because he has been promised that he will get off if he plays the role properly. . . ."

"Well-l," said my friend, and waved a hand lightly.

"And he has been put through the third degree and mysterious drugs are working on him, and he has been hypnotized . . ."

He just waved the hand, contentedly.

"And Whitney's children are being held as hostages. . . ."

"Perhaps," he agreed.

". . . At the Colony Club . . ."

"Perhaps."

"Oh, don't be a damned fool!" I cried. "The man is guilty and he confesses and that's the end of it."

"A big American businessman confesses?" he asked suavely. "And even before the case comes to trial? Does that seem like ordinary procedure to you? Have you ever heard of anybody else doing anything like it?"

"I don't care what anybody else did," I yelled. "*He* did it!"

"Unfortunately for your childish argument," he said, "American justice doesn't happen to be like that. The pettiest crook in the Tombs wouldn't do it. It just isn't human nature."

"To hell with human nature!"

"Ah, very well," he agreed. "But it remains; it doesn't change as easily as all that. People don't confess in advance of public trial in this country, and you know it. They don't even confess after they're found guilty. Harriman, the banker, and Charlie Mitchell didn't confess. Al Capone didn't confess. Gerald Chapman didn't confess. Ruth Snyder and Judd Gray didn't confess; but Richard Whitney confesses. And it doesn't strike you as funny."

"Maybe it has something to do with Roosevelt's policy toward Japan," I said.

"You think that's funny, don't you," said my friend. "You think that's very funny. What if I were to tell you . . ."

"Don't tell me anything. . . . Just tell me this," I said. "If Whitney is tried and is found guilty and goes to jail—that probably won't convince you either, will it?"

"No."

"It'll just mean that he had been framed, promised release, and then double-crossed?"

"Yes," he said, smiling in a superior way.

"He won't be able to say in open court that he had been framed, will he, because of those mysterious drugs?"

My friend simply smiled, contentedly.

"But he won't really be in jail, will he? He'll be living very comfortably in his datcha at Far Hills, N. J.?"

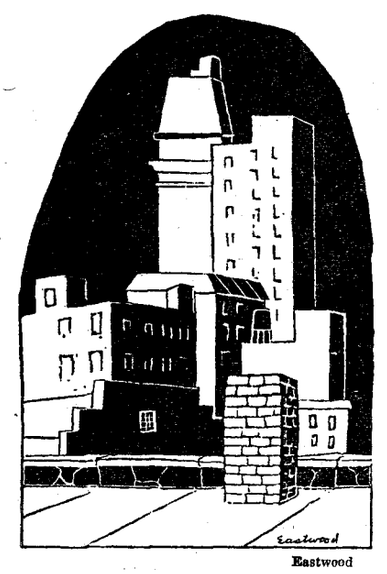
At this he became slightly annoyed.

"If you can believe that a man like Whitney, known as Morgan's broker, would confess . . ."

"It isn't human nature, is it?"

"No!" he said sternly.

ROBERT FORSYTHE.



Eastwood

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Tom Mooney's Day

By Herbert Resner

SACRAMENTO, March 12.

HISTORY was made last Thursday when Tom Mooney appeared before the special session of the California legislature to plead his innocence. Before an excited tense chamber, which was packed to the rafters, Mooney spoke out against the open-shoppers who spent a million dollars to frame him and Warren K. Billings twenty-two years ago. In a session which was called to consider such important issues as relief, housing, and oil, Tom Mooney stole the show. Reactionary Governor Frank F. Merriam called the session to play politics with an eye to the forthcoming elections. But Tom Mooney was subpoenaed through the united efforts of labor and progressives. And Merriam stands condemned in the eyes of the entire electorate as a cowardly, puny politician who dares not face the Mooney issue.

Last night, after four days of parliamentary jockeying, with Mooney's enemies resorting to every trick to forestall a vote, the progressives of the assembly finally forced one, and Tom Mooney was voted a legislative pardon by a count of 41 to 29. There were just a handful of visitors in the gallery when this momentous action was taken, but it was a tremendous victory for labor and liberals. It was a great day for Tom Mooney. Although the reactionary Senate, representing the wealthy agricultural interests, voted against the Mooney pardon, the Assembly, representing the great majority of California voters, again demonstrated that the people of California want Tom Mooney freed.

Mooney's appearance was unprecedented. At first, when the vote to call Mooney had carried, an attempt was made to get the Attorney General to render an opinion that Mooney could not legally be called before the Assembly. But there was no question of the law. Mooney could be called, and the Attorney General finally agreed after a storm of publicity had swept over the state.

Mooney was brought to the state capitol by Warden Court Smith of San Quentin. There were no guards. This was for the man who is kept in prison because he is a "dangerous man," although his innocence is admitted—even by his framers.

There has never been a more dramatic, exciting event in the history of California labor than Tom Mooney's appearance before the Assembly. Nor is this an exaggeration. Crowds gathered in the corridors of the capitol building long before Mooney arrived. They cheered him as he entered the chambers. He was escorted to the speaker's rostrum, and there was greeted by his staunch Assembly supporters, Paul Ritchie, Jack Tenney, Sam Yorty, and others. Tom clasped their hands and affectionately slapped their backs. These men and the others who voted for him are his

Hugo Gellert

friends. They not only believe in Tom's innocence. They love and admire him for his great courage and integrity and the glorious fight he has waged for twenty-two years. Tom told the crowded chambers he would not ask for parole or commutation. That would be a compromise with the forces of greed and privilege which sent him to prison because he dared to organize the street car workers in 1916. Mooney said he would accept only a full pardon or a new trial and acquittal. To do otherwise would be to betray the workers who have loyally stood by him these two-score years.

Tom told me, "It's unbelievable, my being here. It is proof that our freedom is very near."

"This is your day, Tom," I said.

Tom faced dozens of photographers whose lights flashed as they pictured the occasion. Five newsreel cameras recorded the event while their kleig lights glared in Mooney's face. Tom spoke slowly, softly, but the lights and cameras made it a bit difficult for him to get into his story. Finally he asked the photographers to take all the pictures they wanted and then let him talk.

"It is a little difficult for one who has been stored away for twenty-two years to adjust himself to this in a minute, so I hope you folks will kind of bear with me until the photographers get through and get adjusted here, and try to get down to brass tacks," Tom started.

He spoke with dignity, assurance, confidence. Tom told about his family and his life as a child, the intense poverty of his parents, how his mother worked for four dollars a week to support herself and three children. Tom worked as a boy in New England paper mills, then learned the molder's trade and joined the molders' unions. He worked his way west to San Francisco, there in 1912 started to organize the workers—shoe workers, the power company workers, street car men. He was a militant, aggressive trade unionist, and incurred the enmity of the utility interests. They placed Martin Swanson, Pinkerton detective, on his trail. Swanson and Fickert, District Attorney doing the bidding of the power and street car companies, sent Mooney and Billings to prison on perjured testimony for attempting to organize the unorganized workers. The Preparedness Day explosion was transformed into a hunt to make evidence to convict the defendants.

But the frame-up was soon exposed. Oxman, McDonald, Estelle Smith, the Edeaus, were all proved perjurers beyond question. It was a gigantic conspiracy to frame an innocent man, and then, when the entire case collapsed and not a shred of evidence remained, the economic overlords of California insisted on their pound of flesh because they dared not admit that they were guilty of a greater crime than that with which they charged Mooney.

"I am innocent," said Tom Mooney. "I expect my freedom soon, either in the Legislature, through the next Governor, or in the United States Supreme Court. I am grateful to the members of the Assembly for bringing me here, to tell my story. I thank you from the depths of my heart." He broke down and cried a little. There was hardly a person in the hall unmoved.

The legislators asked Mooney questions. He answered them all honestly and with no equivocation. He said that he was framed for one reason only—his labor activities; that he was kept in prison for one reason only—because the great financial interests of the state demanded this.

Even Mooney's enemies in the Assembly admitted he made a splendid presentation of his case. Twenty-two years in prison, suddenly snatched away and thrust into the Assembly forum with the eyes of the country upon him, completely unprepared, Tom Mooney made one of the finest statements ever heard in the history of American labor. It was a glorious occasion, a magnificent victory. It brought Tom's freedom one step nearer. It was a smashing climax to twenty-two years of struggle by Tom Mooney, whose courage has never dimmed, whose faith in the workers has never faltered, whose belief in his ultimate vindication and the victory of the workers is as firm today as it was that tragic day in 1917 when he was sent to San Quentin.

Tom Mooney must be freed. He must be freed before the summer passes. The task before us will be done.

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The Moscow Trial—II

By Joshua Kunitz

THE TRIAL of the Right-Trotskyist group of traitors in Moscow is over. By the time this reaches the reader the people who have plotted against the Soviet state, its leaders, and against world peace will have been sentenced to the punishments provided for such crimes by Soviet law.

The trial is over, but the slanders and vilifications of the Soviet Union in the capitalist press continue, assuming ever new forms. True, by this time the whole Trotsky-Lovestoneite crowd and their "liberal" stooges have been pretty much discredited; but their odious activities have not stopped. Therefore I feel that elucidation of several more points in connection with the trial itself is still in place.

TROTSKY'S DISCLAIMERS—Every time a contact is mentioned between Trotsky and his confederates now on trial in Moscow, Trotsky leaps up with an indignant disclaimer. These disclaimers are becoming a little grotesque. They must be positively embarrassing to his admirers. This indefatigable letter writer, this organizational dynamo who managed to keep closest contact with Trotskyist nuclei in every country in the world, and who often "startles" the innocent with "inside dope" on the Soviet Union, in defiance of all reason, ignores the one country in which, it seems, he would be particularly interested. But it turns out that Mr. Trotsky struck the Soviet Union off the map and out of his mind. He has done more than that. Whether moved by a profound reverence for Soviet law, or by hauteur resulting from a sense of deeply injured pride, or by just a comradely desire not to compromise his Trotskyist friends with unnecessary social visits, we do not know, but the unalterable fact remains that, according to his own statements, not only has Trotsky always and religiously shunned the Soviet Union, but he ordered his son, Sedov, and his agents to shun every Trotskyite that ever left the Soviet Union for a trip abroad. Piatakov, Krestinsky, Bessonov, Romm, Muralov, Holzman, Radek—Trotsky would neither see them, talk to them, write to them, nor receive letters from them. It was a matter of principle with him: he simply wouldn't have anything to do with Trotskyites who were in a strategic position to do something for him.

RUTHLESSNESS, ETC.—Trotsky and his apologists have been raising a hue and cry over the "ruthlessness" and "brutality" of Stalin, the Communist Party, and Soviet justice. Stalin, they would have you believe, arbitrarily and for personal reasons, swooped down upon his opponents, "the real makers of the revolution," the "old guard" of the Bolshevik Party, and destroyed them. Courts, investigations, trials, admission of guilt, evidence—these are all a travesty and a mockery. Stalin seems to derive special pleasure from pouncing upon and slaughtering "genuine" revolutionists.

What is the truth in this matter?

As one who has studied the history of the oppositionists in the U.S.S.R. for a number of years and in considerable detail, I read all these accusations with amazement. For the undeniable truth is that rather than excessive suspiciousness and cruelty, the treatment received by the various oppositionists at the hands of the Communist Party and the Soviet government reveals every sign of truthfulness, magnanimity, and a curious, yet admirably human, unwillingness to believe that the Trotskyites, Bukharinites, and Zinovievites and other "old non-Bolsheviks" had actually sunk to such depths of political and moral degeneration.

Not that the leadership was guilty of political blindness or naïvete.

In his report before the Joint Plenum of the Central Control Commission of the C.P.S.U. on the results of the first Five-Year Plan (January 1933), Stalin very distinctly warned the Party of the dangers. He said:

> We must bear in mind that the growth of the power of the Soviet State will increase the resistance of the last remnants of the dying classes. It is precisely because they are dying and living their last days that they will pass from one form of attack to another, to sharper forms of attack; appeal to the backward strata of the population and mobilize them against the Soviet Union. There is no mischief and slander that these "have beens" will not commit against the Soviet government and around which they will not try to mobilize the backward elements. This may give ground for the revival of the activities of the defeated groups of the old counter-revolutionary parties: the Socialist-Revolutionists in the center and in the outlying regions; it may give grounds also for the revival of the activities of the fragments of counter-revolutionary opposition elements, the Trotskyists and Right-deviationists. Of course, there is nothing terrible in this. But we must bear all this in mind if we want to put an end to these elements quickly, and without great loss.

Marxist analysis of the situation enabled Stalin to see the trends, but he could not prognosticate how those trends would be refracted through the individual psychology of the various one-time oppositionists. Here the predisposition was to believe in the sincerity of their pro-Party protestations.

THEIR ANTI-PARTY PAST—Examine the record. Almost every one of the leading oppositionists had at one time or another been expelled from the Communist Party for insubordination to the will of the majority, for obstructionism, factionalism, and secret collaboration with anti-Soviet elements! Expulsion in each case was followed by professed recognition of their mistakes, sometimes immediate and sometimes after a lapse of months or years. Retraction was immediately followed by a happy reinstatement in the Party. In some cases, that of Zinoviev, for example, reinstatement was followed again by factionalism, again by expulsion, again by supposed recognition of mistakes, and again by reinstatement. In *every* case these people, on being reinstated in the Party, were immediately placed into positions of exceeding responsibility and trust. They were Commissars, Assistant Commissars, Ambassadors, Chiefs of Industries, editors of leading state and Party organs, heads of academies, interpreters of Soviet foreign policy, and what not. They were sent abroad without any misgiving. Krestinsky, Smirnov, Piatakov, Holzman, Radek—they all traveled up and down Europe freely and often. Rakovsky, shortly after he retracted and was taken back into the Party, went on an important mission to Japan.

In view of what we now know of the activities of these gentlemen, such trustfulness on the part of the Central Committee and Joseph Stalin seems almost inexplicable. On closer analysis, however, we can understand the motive behind it. The Party was inclined to regard the defections of the oppositionists as temporary, though serious, vacillations, in face of great difficulties, on the part of subjectively honest and sincere revolutionists. All that was necessary, it was felt, was to demonstrate by actual achievement that the revolution was unfolding, that the proletariat was gaining ground, that industries were growing, that agriculture was improving, that culture was spreading, that Socialism was actually being built, and these honest but misguided revolutionists would see the errors of their ways and gladly come back into the Party's fold.

This unsuspecting magnanimity toward the revolution's wayward sons was a Lenin heritage. Several years after the early defections of Zinoviev and Kamenev, Rykov, Bukharin, Piatakov, and others, Lenin, who at that time had not the least suspicion that some of these men had previously plotted his arrest and even his "physical annihilation," spoke of them as "splendid Communists" who on the eve of the October revolution and soon after, "committed mistakes which we now recall with reluctance. Why with reluctance? Because without special need it is wrong to recall such mistakes as have been fully rectified."

Lenin could not imagine that these people were what they were; just as he had once before been unable to imagine and actually fought against the belief that Malinovsky, for a long time prior to the revolution a member of the Central Committee of the Bolshevik Party, was a Judas and a Czarist spy. Overwhelming evidence had to be presented before Lenin was finally convinced of Malinovsky's guilt. The first tendency was to credit a Com-

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munist with revolutionary sincerity. Mistakes were forgotten, once they were rectified. Such has been the spirit of the Party through the years, as the history of the oppositionists until recently amply illustrates.

Herein lies the answer to those who like to dwell on the incredibility of the charges against these men. In a sense it is, of course, incredible. Yet it is this very incredibility that, if carefully pondered, makes the present trial, as well as all the previous ones, so utterly credible. I do not mean to be paradoxical. What I have just suggested is no more paradoxical than the suggestion that the magnitude and severity of the Soviet purge is the result not of a morbid suspiciousness and cruelty but, on the contrary, of a supreme trustfulness and magnanimity. Indeed, these two apparent paradoxes complement each other: they are parts of the same basic Soviet reality.

Just as it is difficult for honest people in this country to imagine old Bolsheviks committing such monstrous crimes, so was it difficult for people in the U.S.S.R. to imagine it. These "old non-Bolsheviks" were trusted; that is why they were able to carry on all their machinations. When the thing broke, it was just as much of a shock to Soviet citizens as it was to Americans. When these people had come back to the Party, they had been taken in with outstretched arms. Everything was open to them. Who could have imagined that it was all a maneuver, a tactic, a trick, a deception? Something untoward, like the assassination of Kirov, had to occur to arouse suspicion. And even so, it was many months before the full outline of the vast plot began to emerge from the haze with which these traitors have surrounded it. This was when the incredible became credible, and magnanimity yielded to severity.

WILLINGNESS TO TRUST—I recall vividly the moment in the first oppositionist trial when Kamenev, in his testimony, let casually slip the names of Bukharin, Rykov, and Tomsky. A flutter of surprise swept the courtroom when these three names were, as it then seemed, gratuitously dragged in by the witness. Vyshinsky and the judges showed as much surprise as the rest of us. On the following day the morning papers announced the suicide of Tomsky. That seemed to suggest that Tomsky was guilty of something quite serious, and that he preferred death to facing the proletarian court. It suggested, moreover, that Bukharin and Rykov, his closest collaborators, were also involved in some way, and that something drastic would be undertaken by the government as regarded them. Day after day, people scrutinized the press, but no sign of drastic action was discerned. Bukharin continued signing the *Izvestia* as Editor-in-Chief, and Rykov continued in his post as before. Several days later, the State Prosecutor's office issued a public announcement that Kamenev's implicit accusation of Bukharin and Rykov had been investigated and that nothing had been discovered for which Bukharin and Rykov could bear legal responsibility. For some time, Bukharin continued signing the *Izvestia*. It was not very long before the Radek-Piatakov trial that I met Bukharin at a soirée given by Litvinov for the foreign correspondents. That was the last time I saw him. Shortly after, rumors of his and Rykov's arrests grew more persistent. Then came Radek's testimony implicating Bukharin still more deeply. And then everybody knew that Bukharin was arrested. This episode is characteristic, and it certainly is no proof of any eagerness to leap upon and destroy an "old Bolshevik."

Something similar took place as regards Tukhachevsky. At the second Moscow trial, Radek testified that Vitaly Putna, Tukhachevsky's aide, had come to him with a request from Tukhachevsky. When Tukhachevsky's name was mentioned a murmur of amazement swept the courtroom.

The following day, Vyshinsky, the prosecutor, cited Radek's testimony and requested the witness to explain in what connection he mentioned Tukhachevsky's name.

Radek: Tukhachevsky had been commissioned by the government with some task for which he could not find the necessary material. I alone was in possession of this material. He rang me up and asked if I had this material. I had it, and he accordingly sent Putna, with whom he had to discharge this commission, to get this material from me. Of course, Tukhachevsky had no idea either of Putna's role or of my criminal role.

Vyshinsky: And Putna?

Radek: He was a member of the organization, and he did not come to talk about the organization, but I took advantage of his visit to have this talk.

Vyshinsky: So Putna came to you, having been sent by Tukhachevsky on official business having no bearing whatever on your affairs since he, Tukhachevsky, had no relations with them whatever?

Radek: Tukhachevsky never had any relations whatever with them.

Vyshinsky: He sent Putna on official business?

Radek: Yes.

Vyshinsky: And you took advantage of this in order to engage in your own particular affairs?

Radek: Yes.

Vyshinsky: Do I understand you correctly, that Putna had dealings with the members of your Trotskyite underground organization, and that your reference to Tukhachevsky was made in connection with the fact that Putna came on official business on Tukhachevsky's orders?

Radek: I confirm that, and I say that I never had and could not have had any dealings with Tukhachevsky connected with counter-revolutionary activities, because I knew Tukhachevsky's attitude to the Party and the government to be that of an absolutely devoted man. (page 146)

Tukhachevsky remained unmolested. Several weeks after the Radek-Piatakov trial, an article by Tukhachevsky on military tactics appeared in the magazine *Bolshevik*, the organ of the Central Committee of the Communist Party of the U.S.S.R. That was positive proof that the confidence of the Party in Tukhachevsky's loyalty remained unshaken. On May 1, about four months after the Radek-Piatakov trial, Tukhachevsky, in all his glory, was seen on the Red Square, watching the parade. His portrait still decorated the streets of Moscow. Then there was talk of his going to England for the coronation. Suddenly, a brief announcement appeared that Tukhachevsky was transferred to a post somewhere on the Volga, and shortly after came the news of his trial and execution. Gamarnik, who was implicated in the Tukhachevsky conspiracy, remained free to the end, committing suicide only on the eve of the trial. This too, is certainly no indication of hasty action.

CRIME AND PUNISHMENT—The abysmal ignorance of many ostensibly cultivated Americans of the fundamental law of our land is astonishing. Thus, a teacher of civics who is also a high-school principal in New York City was completely overwhelmed when, in reply to his mordant comments on Soviet justice, especially with regard to the confessions at the Moscow trials, Article III, Section 3, of the Constitution of the United States, was cited. The man who felt so competent to discuss Soviet legal procedure actually refused to credit this citation until he saw the Article in black and white:

No person shall be convicted of treason unless on the testimony of two witnesses to the same overt act, or *on confession in open court.*

It was the first time he had ever heard that the American law deems open confession in court sufficient to convict a man on a charge of treason. He felt a bit foolish, for those convicted on treason charges in Moscow not only confessed in open court, but heard their confessions corroborated by numerous witnesses and accomplices and substantiated by no end of circumstantial evidence.

The one demurrer the teacher made was with regard to the word "treason," which according to our constitution consists "only in levying war" against the United States "or in adhering to their enemies, giving them aid and comfort." He maintained that what made the Moscow trial horrible is the "loose" use of the word treason. "The U.S.S.R. is not at war; therefore, nobody should be held on charges of treason." First, to say that the U.S.S.R. is not at war, is like saying that China is not at present engaged in armed conflict, since Japan has never openly declared war against her. The alliance of the fascist states against the Soviet Union, the Berlin-Rome-Tokyo axis, is no fiction. The frequent probings of the Soviet border by the Japanese military is no fiction. The sending in of hundreds of spies and terrorists across the Soviet border is no fiction. The land of Socialism, surrounded by aggressive inimical, fascist-imperialist countries, is no fiction. The fascist war against the democratic peoples is raging not only in Spain and China, but internally, in every country in the world. The hungry imperialist powers are only waiting for the opportune moment to pounce upon the workers' and peasants' Socialist, Soviet republic, and tear it to shreds. And the various groups of Trotskyites, Bukharinites, Social Revolutionists, etc., became their natural agents and allies. To say that the Soviet Union is not at present at war is to indulge in academic hair-splitting.

Second, though in the Soviet conception of treason, war is not the sole touchstone, the

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A Redfield

The Trotskyist Writer, Having Exposed Everything, Moves on to Farther Fields

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word is not used "loosely." Article 133 of the Soviet Constitution is quite specific in its definition of treason as "violation of the oath, desertion to the enemy, impairing the military power of the state, or espionage on behalf of a foreign state," but the punishment for this crime is also specific—"Treason against the country is punishable with the full severity of the law as the most grievous offense," the "full severity of the law" meaning death.

LEGAL PROCEDURE—Americans and Britons, trained to the thought that the Anglo-Saxon system of law is the acme of perfection, tend to view the role of preliminary private investigation in criminal cases with great apprehension. Yet, it should be emphasized, since most people in this country are utterly unaware of it, that such investigations are not a peculiarly Soviet practice, and that in all of continental Europe they constitute an inseparable part of the procedure in criminal prosecution.

The relative merits of the two procedures—the Anglo-Saxon and the continental European—I am not prepared to discuss. Sidney and Beatrice Webb, however, in the seventy-page postscript to the second edition of their excellent study, *Soviet Communism: A New Civilization,* suggest that "what needs explanation is rather the British procedure of criminal prosecution, which differs so remarkably from that of all the other nations in Europe."

In discussing specifically the Soviet trials—all but the last one—and the confessions, they, after giving a burlesque description of the absurdities, conventions, and legal fictions characteristic of the Anglo-Saxon system of criminal prosecution, make this cogent comment:

> May not this procedure, which seems so natural and inevitable to us, very intelligibly strike a Russian as a farce tolerated because our rules of evidence and forms of trial have never been systematically revised on rational lines? Why should a conspirator who is caught out by the Government, and who knows that he is caught out and that no denials or hypothetical fairy tales will help him to escape—why should he degrade himself uselessly by a mock defense instead of at once facing the facts and discussing his part in them quite candidly with his captors? There is a possibility of moving them by such a friendly course; in a mock defense there is none. . . . The Russian prisoners simply behave naturally and sensibly, as Englishmen would were they not virtually compelled by their highly artificial legal sytem to go through a routine which is useful to the accused only when there is some doubt as to the facts or as to the guilt or innocence of the conduct in question. What possible good could it do them to behave otherwise? Why should they waste the time of the court and disgrace themselves by prevaricating like pickpockets merely to employ the barristers? . . . Some of us are so obsessed with our national routine that the candor of the Russian conspirators seems grotesque and insane. Which of the two courses, viewed by an impartial visitor from Mars, would appear the saner?

Their "impression," based on a "careful perusal of the full reports of the proceedings and speeches of the public trials," is that "the defendants were really guilty of the treasonable conspiracies with which they were charged."

But perhaps the venerable libertarians, Sidney and Beatrice Webb, are also agents of the G.P.U.! Ask Professor John Dewey. . . .

NEW LINE OF ATTACK—An examination of the comments on the trial in the capitalist press reveals a gradual veering away from the assertion that it was a frame-up to a grudging admission of the guilt of the accused. Harold Denny, not a friendly reporter, in the New York *Times* of March 14, asks, "Are the Moscow treason trials faked?" and then says:

> After witnessing two of the three public trials and studying the testimony of the other, this writer now is quite well convinced that in their main outline the cases were well-founded even though they were established in ways strange to our ideas of justice, and though many of their details were erroneous and perhaps false and fabricated.

I have already discussed the ideas of justice held by people like Mr. Denny, accustomed to the Anglo-Saxon method of procedure. Nevertheless, Mr. Denny was convinced, which proves that the evidence presented at the trial was of such a character as to render further insistence on the unqualified innocence of the Bukharin-Rykov gang untenable. Having been forced to give up one of their major lines of attack against the U.S.S.R., these gentlemen adopted another, and what they think is a more effective, line. Granted, they say, that the accused were guilty, then the logical conclusion is, in the words of the New York *Times* editor, that "we are witnessing today the moral and intellectual collapse of Communism."

Now this, if true, would indeed be terrible. For with the "moral and intellectual collapse of Communism," the brightest hope of contemporary humanity would be extinguished, and life for many wretched millions on this earth would scarcely be worth living.

Fortunately, the *Times's* conclusion is arrived at more by wishful than logical thinking, more on the basis of prejudgment than that of knowledge. First, why "Communism"? Not even the most sanguine Communists have ever claimed that Communism has already been attained in the Soviet Union. What the Soviets have been and are still in the process of building is Socialism. Communism, the ultimate goal, is still in the remote future; since it has never existed, it seems a little premature for the *Times* to announce its "moral and intellectual collapse."

But suppose Communism had existed in the U.S.S.R. It still wouldn't logically follow that the apprehension of twenty-one, or forty-one or a hundred and one counter-revolutionary conspirators spelled the "moral and intellectual collapse of the Communist system. In view of the confessions of the defendants, it would be more logical and in greater conformity with objective fact to speak of the "moral and intellectual collapse" of the counter-revolutionary Trotsky, Bukharin, Zinoviev groups. True, the Soviet revolution has had its traitors. So did the American and the French, so have the Spanish and the Chinese. There was a time in the life of our own republic when scores of reactionary pro-slavery governors, senators, congressmen, and other high officials were involved in a plot to break the Union. They were more successful than the Soviet plotters, for they actually brought on the Civil War. Was the suppression of the rebels, one of the bloodiest wars in history, and the triumph of the forces that stood for a united and free nation proof of the "moral and intellectual collapse" of American democracy? Or was it proof of the collapse of the slave-owning Southern aristocracy?

One more example. The American labor movement is permeated with stool-pigeons and labor spies. There are more than forty thousand of these vermin. Would a vigorous effort on the part of our labor movement to rid itself of them indicate the degeneracy of the labor movement? And doesn't the mere encouragement of such a degrading phenomenon in our national life rather show the "moral and intellectual collapse" of those who employ spies in order to attain their selfish ends?

SOCIALIST MORALITY—The pose of moral and intellectual superiority assumed by the spokesmen of the capitalist system, the condoners of exploitation, social parasitism, race discrimination, political corruption, anti-labor legislation, imperialist domination of colonial peoples, and every reactionary move made by the monopolies and their political henchmen is too fantastic to need detailed refutation. Theirs is the morality of the grasping landlord, the union-busting boss, the tax-evading millionaire, the unconscionable Wall Street shark, the enemy of progress and human decency. In a healthy environment, their hypocritical mouthings about morality and intelligence could arouse nothing but disgust.

It is with a genuine sense of relief and pride in man's achievements that one's thoughts turn to the one Socialist society where the prevailing morality and intelligence are those of the laboring masses, a society where all citizens are guaranteed the fundamental rights to work, to rest, to leisure, to education, to maintenance in old age and in sickness and the loss of capacity to work; where the equality of all citizens, irrespective of their nationality or race or sex, in all spheres of economic, state, cultural, social and political life, is an immutable law; where there are no landlords, no capitalists, no exploiters, and where all the forces of the state are used to protect the interests of the working masses and not of parasitic classes; a society where everyone is trained to a full sense of his social responsibility and where public servants, however eminently placed, cannot for long engage in malpractices without bringing down upon them social obloquy and severest punishment; where life is improving; where births are increasing; where deaths are falling off; where people are economically able to marry when they wish and have children when they choose; where every avenue for a full creative life is open to all; and where the moral and intellectual standards of the New York *Times* and those for which it speaks would seem like an echo from man's savage past.

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We Speak for the Unemployed

By David Lasser

(The following is the first half of a statement made by David Lasser, National President of the Workers' Alliance, before the Senate Committee on Unemployment, on March 8.)

IN presenting this statement on the problem of unemployment, I wish to explain what the Workers' Alliance of America is and our place in this picture.

The Workers' Alliance is the nationwide organization of unemployed and W.P.A. workers and those seeking improved social security. Our organization, arising from the economic crisis, seeks to represent those who have suffered most directly from unemployment.

This explanation is necessary because there are still some people who do not understand or who resent the existence of an organization whose purpose is to organize and represent the unemployed.

They feel, although lawyers and undertakers, bankers and bakers, doctors and dentists, have a right to organize to protect their economic and social interests, that unemployed do not have the same rights. They feel that an organization of unemployed which dares to present the "demand" for the right to live and work is an offense against good taste.

This feeling has led in many communities to restrictions on the rights of the unemployed and W.P.A. workers to organize, and discrimination against them for organizational activities. And when this fails to discourage organization, attempts are made to blacken the character of the unemployed by calling them "chiselers," "lazy bums," "bolsheviks."

It is our contention that without an organization such as ours far less would have been done to meet the problem of unemployment than has been done. We have stirred the social conscience of the nation—not simply to cold statistics of unemployment—but to the vast human tragedy that lies behind cold figures.

The presence of an organization of people seeking the right to work and the right to live is a continuous indictment of our social order. Our organization will be justified in ending its activity and its existence only when the millions of unemployed are turned to useful employment, and not before.

With these remarks I wish to thank the committee for its recognition of the rightful place of our movement in our social order, and for this opportunity to present our position on unemployment.

I WISH to deal with four major questions: first, what in our view caused the 1929 and 1937 crises? secondly, who should be responsible for the maintenance of the unemployed? third, what has actually been done for the unemployed to date? and, fourth, what program, in our opinion, is necessary for recovery?

We do not here pretend to be skilled economic experts. We will deal with these problems from the simple and practical viewpoint of millions of workers who want and feel they have certain elemental rights in our social system. These rights are: the right to gainful and useful employment, the right to bring up their families in decency, the right to share in the good things that science and invention have made possible.

In dealing with this whole question there have been two well-defined theories, which have been present in the operation of our whole economic system as well as in the treatment of the unemployed. These conflicting theories have found eloquent expression before this committee.

One theory is narrowly selfish, looking to the profit of a relatively few; resentful of government interference; indifferent to the welfare of the masses. This is what I call the "anarchistic" approach.

The second theory seeks the "general welfare"—approaches problems from the standpoint of the people as a whole. It is the "social" approach.

The American "anarchists," our larger business and financial interests, look complacently upon business booms and depressions as natural and inevitable. They believe that recovery can come only when prices and wages have been thoroughly deflated. They believe that recovery is only possible when government "keeps its hands off business" and when relief is administered under the Elizabethan Poor Law of 1601.

Joseph Hirsch

The "social" theory is that private enterprise under a system of private profit has both a privilege and a responsibility. The privilege is the right to own and operate our economic enterprises. The responsibility is to see that the economy of the nation operates for the welfare of the nation as a whole.

When private enterprise fails in any of its responsibilities, the government, as a representative of all of the people, has the right and the duty to step in and take such steps as are necessary to promote the general welfare.

What does the record show about the crises of 1929 and 1937 to indicate whether we should accept the "anarchistic" or the "social" approach to unemployment relief and economic recovery?

The years 1922-1929 present a vivid lesson. Here we had the "golden age" when those who propose the "let business alone" theory were in complete control of the nation. They had complacent local and national governments, peace in the world, relative peace on the industrial field.

In the years 1922-29 our industrial corporations made nearly $62,000,000,000 in net profits, and distributed of this nearly $45,000,000,000 in cash dividends alone. Their surpluses had increased by more than $16,000,000,000 during this period.

In 1929 the hurricane struck. In the next five years the breadlines lengthened in every city. Hundreds of thousands of homeowners and farmers faced eviction. Millions of unemployed were told to be patient, that relief was a local matter and that individual initiative would solve everything.

What happened to these tremendous surpluses of our corporations? Were they poured out to save workers and farmers from disaster, to stem the tide of economic ruin?

In the years 1930-1933, although these corporations suffered a net loss of $2,700,000,000, they distributed cash dividends of $21,000,000,000! In other words, while unemployed were told they must depend on individual initiative, stockholders shared "unemployment insurance" to the tune of $21,000,000,000. While the federal government told the unemployed relief for them was a local matter, the R.F.C. was ladling out billions of dollars to banks and railroads.

We saw that the 1929 crisis was the result of crazy speculation, crazy search for superprofits, crazy anarchistic production. We saw it as the result of the greed that preferred to dump goods abroad rather than permit our workers to have money enough to buy them. We saw it as the result of the failure to provide a single penny for the rainy day for the

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millions of workers while providing $21,000,000,000 for a rainy day for stockholders.

We saw workers ruthlessly and coldbloodedly thrown on the streets to starve by the employing group, and then being told that neither business nor government has any responsibility for their lives or well-being.

How does 1937 compare with 1929? Do we not see the same crazy speculation in stocks and in commodities, the same ruthless search for super-profits, the same anarchistic production, the same boosting of prices; and then the same ruthless discharge of 4,000,000 workers within a few months?

And how do corporation profits compare at this time, when business is allegedly writhing under the iron heel of the New Deal?

In 1936 dividend payments were 80 percent and in 1937 83 percent of the1929 peak. Does this indicate the wrecking of our business enterprises by the New Deal measures? Are we not justified in assuming that the 1937 collapse was a recurrence of 1929 cupidity and stupidity, plus some conscious blackjacking of the American people by big business?

Today the banks of the United States have more than $1,300,000,000 of idle capital in the form of excess reserves, capable of producing more than $5,000,000,000 of bank credit. Why is not this idle capital being used? Perhaps the gentlemen of big business who appeared before this committee can give the answer. They have given it in part in their implications that unless they get the kind of taxes they want this money will not be used.

I am suggesting, therefore, that the sudden collapse of business in 1937 and the presence of such large reserves, that the relatively small number of business failures, combine to indicate a conscious restriction of production and credit in order to stage a political holdup of the American people.

Now these gentlemen who have operated our economic order and led us into the crises of 1929 and 1937 come before this committee and propose their remedies. They ask that their anarchistic policies be given another chance.

I ask you gentlemen of the committee: suppose you had left a man in charge of your house and as a result part of the house burned down. He came and asked for a second chance and you gave it to him, and another disastrous fire took place. And now he comes and says, "Let's forget the past; let's forget those two fires and the destruction of a large part of your house. Just put me in charge again and everything will be all right."

Would you not be extremely careless of the welfare of your wife and children if you gave this man a third chance?

That is the situation you face today.

We come now to the question of the responsibility for the support of the unemployed. We remember vividly the days when big business ruled this nation without restraint. The government policy, "We have no responsibility for the welfare of the millions of unemployed —go elsewhere," was consistent with the general economic policy of big business.

We know the disastrous effects of that policy and its repudiation by the American people in 1932. As a result a change occurred, and the responsibility of the federal government has been acknowledged by the President and the Congress.

Today we see a reaction setting in, a vast propaganda campaign to remove federal responsibility and return the care of the unemployed to the states.

This campaign is based on three principles: first, that the states can do the job better; secondly, that the direct intervention of the federal government has promoted a vast federal bureaucracy; and, third, that the federal government has spent actually more money than was necessary.

I wish to deal with the third question first. Actually how much has the federal government done for the unemployed? The New Deal measures have done far less for the unemployed than the situation would warrant, and by retreating in the face of big business have actually held back recovery. There was never enough conscious planning.

The well-oiled propaganda machine of big business has created the impression of huge sums of money flowing in a never ending stream to enrich the unemployed. We have the picture presented of the unemployed lolling under trees, while the federal paymaster dumps streams of gold into their laps.

The record will show as an actual fact that no help was ever given to the majority of the unemployed and that they had to share the wages of some employed member of the family. A large section received only direct relief on such a low scale that we should hang our heads in shame. A third section was given work relief at a wage less than three-fourths of the minimum set for health and decency.

Frank Davidson

Here is the record: During the period of 1930-37 there were 82,900,000 man years of total unemployment, according to the American Federation of Labor figures. The unemployed lost during this period $80,000,000,000 in wages. The unemployed received during this period from the federal government in W.P.A., C.C.C., P.W.A. wages, social security benefits and direct relief, a total of $8,763,000,000, or $105 per man per year of unemployment. In other words, they received, as a whole, $8.75 a month to compensate them for enforced unemployment.

The average wage of W.P.A. workers today is about fifty dollars a month; on Farm Security it is about twenty dollars a month. Where is the golden stream? Today, less than one-fifth of the unemployed are getting W.P.A. work. Then compare this with the job the states are doing.

Take the record of direct relief standards. I have the figures of the Social Security Board for October, 1937. The average relief per case for thirty-six states was $16.87 a month to live on—to buy food, pay rent, buy clothing, pay doctors' bills—and yes, to keep looking well enough to search for a job. How would you divide it? Perhaps ten dollars a month for food for the family, five dollars a month for rent. But that makes fifteen dollars already, and leaves only $1.87 a month for all other needs. I confess I can't figure out the distribution.

Then let's look at some state figures to see how the unemployed are growing fat. Here is South Carolina, where the relief budget is $12.31 a month per family; in North Dakota, it is relatively high—$22 a month per family; in Missouri it is $5.74 a month per family—remember, gentlemen, *$5.74 a month per family!* In Mississippi, it is $5.07 a month; Georgia, $3.35; Illinois, $16.66.

And some states make no reports, either because they give no relief, or do not want to publish their shamefully low figures to the nation.

Even in New York, where relief is relatively high, Mayor LaGuardia's own investigating committee found that the average relief was 40 percent less than is necessary for subsistence.

These figures indicate that through many years, the bodies and minds of the unemployed have been undermined by the termite of hunger. And because that hunger is not especially dramatic, because people do not drop like flies, it does not excite some of us as does a flood in which people drown before our eyes.

Who has actually carried the burden of unemployment? The unemployed have, to the tune of about $70,000,000,000 net loss in wages, to the tune of millions of hungry bodies, filthy homes, ragged clothing, hopeless lives. Knowing these things as we do from personal experience, from seeing and living with the unemployed, do you expect us to have patience with well-fed gentlemen earning several hundred thousand dollars a year who come here and tell this committee that what

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Hyman Warsager

Congress of Chemists Meeting in Rome in May to Hear Columbia Professor on "The Chemist as a Defender of His Fatherland"—NEWS ITEM

we need is to take off some annoying taxes, and to stop calling names? Do you expect the unemployed under a situation of this kind to maintain unending patience and unending faith?

The record shows that insofar as responsibility is concerned—that where the states did the job, as in the case of direct relief, they did a miserable job; that in the case of W.P.A., although the scope of the program was always far from adequate, and the wages paid far less than subsistence, the conditions of work often bad, yet it seems good in comparison with state relief.

Then the question of federal bureaucracy is raised in connection with the W.P.A. program. As a matter of fact, if bureaucracy exists it is a state bureaucracy of state administrators in which the federal W.P.A. actually has little power. Furthermore, there is nothing different as we have discovered between a bureaucracy on W.P.A. and a state of local bureaucracy on relief.

Let us be frank—the whole fight is a fight over who is to pay the cost of unemployment relief. Those who want to starve the unemployed want local and state relief, and for very good reasons. First, they know that localities and states do not have the taxing power to raise large sums, and that the money must be raised from farmers, small householders and consumers. The strategy of those who favor local relief is to create resentment from the ratepayers against the unemployed for every increase in taxes, while permitting the large federal taxpayers to evade the obligation.

It is common sense in handling this vast problem to remember that the auto workers of Detroit, the steel workers of Pittsburgh, the rubber workers of Akron are unemployed because of national conditions. and that national treatment is necessary for recovery.

Our whole experience leads us to be firm advocates of a national plan and program, and to be utterly opposed to State and local control of the unemployment work and relief.

The difference actually is that W.P.A. and P.W.A. and C.C.C. spent money, and now we have billions of dollars in schools, roads, public improvement, sewers, stadia, parks, and the research and cultural activities. These can no more be written off as simply expense than could the construction of a plant or purchase of equipment by a manufacturer. They are additions to national wealth and welfare.

The state, on the other hand, did a very poor job of keeping people alive, and as a result they have today millions of hungry and sick people. I refer you to the report of the U.S. Public Health Service in its survey of sickness among various income groups. This survey indicates 5 percent more illness among relief families than among those who earn $3,000 a year or over; that chronic illnesses—lasting over three months—were 87 percent more numerous in relief families than in the more fortunate $3,000 a year and over class.

In the light of such facts—the amount of relief given, the taxing power of the federal government, and the consequent effect upon the people—can we say that we shall turn this problem over to the States?

It is very surprising to us to find a man like Charles Taft come to this Committee and ask for state relief. Mr. Taft's plan, when boiled down, really comes to "planned poverty."

We have generally found that much of this fanaticism over states' rights is not devotion to a political theory but actually devotion to certain vested rights—the vested rights of big taxpayers to escape their just share of the national burden and the vested right to starve the unemployed without let or hindrance.

("The Road to Recovery," the concluding part of Mr. Lasser's statement, will appear next week.)

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READERS' FORUM

Formulas in Literature

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IN the issue of February 15 Nathaniel Buchwald speaks of "we" having grown weary of "the oppression-strike-victory formula" in literature, although he is treating particularly of the drama. Does he mean the critics have grown weary of the formula? Or is his a geographical "we?" At any rate the matter would not be deserving of correspondence save that in the New York *Times,* and other intelligently edited journals, there is evident impatience which brushes aside as unavailing certain items of various literary forms which are spoken of as "hackneyed," or "stereotyped," or abounding in "theatrical clichés."

Perhaps this sort of comment may be more or less expected of the New York *Times,* but it is possible to maintain that the formula is far from ready for the garbage-heap. As long as a novel, a play, or any sort of literary vehicle has character and atmosphere, its form deserves to be regarded critically as exemplification of the universals in the modern scene. And oppression, strikes, and both losses and victories shall be with us for a long time to come.

Possibly in New York and environs the bulk of the citizenry has had its look at and its digestive taste of literature of this sort: the formula of "we have suffered, we struggled, we won." But it is still a valid thesis. Furthermore, not one of a hundred workers in the far West is aware that there is any literature whatsoever for him outside the pulps, the slicks, the comics, and the lurids. I believe this could be proved statistically true of a cross-section of workers.

The form of "strike subject" has the profoundest of futures before it; and it is disconcerting in the utmost to read in the NEW MASSES that the formula is frowned upon, even by critics. It is an idea of mine that potential audiences of greatest appreciation value are to be found among workers. Critics, students, and intellectuals may be acknowledged as being inherently aware that certain conditions of literary expression (such as structural sequences, grammar, etc.) have standards beyond debate. Aside from the mechanics of writing, forms merit comment on the basis of adequacy. If literature is ever to reach beyond persons psychologically equipped to appreciate nuances, ambiguities, and subtleties, it has to be the sort that speaks plainly to a somewhat physically tired man, and that acts directly upon the emotions. Thus, there are places for action literature and mental literature, but the greater field belongs to the former.

The real competition for labor-formula literature is the category of trash, not the category of deep, deep stuff. That is to say that the whole education program of the United States leaves the bulk of the people unequipped to digest the psychological gruel that New York critics seem to want written. This fact leaves those readers little more than the fare offered by the pulps, but—dammit, what if one wants to write for these people and doesn't want to write pulp stories? Cannot it be understood in New York that if only the "hackneyed clichés" could be more numerous (not *less*) and could be caused to appear in public and circulating libraries, much of the fight for human betterment would be fought before blood was shed?

The Cinderella formula has done service for hundreds of years. So have other formulas. (And some items of these are "classic," whatever that means.) And now, after a scant few years of realization that real, atmospheric workers' stories can be printed occasionally, the critics get sick of them.

Well, maybe I'm wrong, or maybe I don't get the point. But I know that whereas a story such as *The Treasure of the Sierra Madre* was returned to me after a loan with a maximum of enthusiasm, *The Outward Room* was returned unfinished. A rebuttal might point out that the former is not an oppression, strikes and both losses and victories illustrate my greater point, namely that of mass appeal as related to specialized appeal.

With millions hungry for culture, it seems there is a field for creativity which goes beyond "a writer writing for writers."

Seattle, Wash. L. A. LAUER.

Mr. Buchwald Replies

TO THE NEW MASSES:

IN objecting to the overworked pattern of the strike-drama I advocated neither the abandonment of the "strike subject," nor the kind of "writing for writers" referred to by L. A. Lauer. It seems to me that audiences, no less than critics, have grown weary of the type of play in which both plot and character can be guessed and discounted in advance.

On the other hand, it is undoubtedly true that oppression, strikes, and both losses and victories shall be with us for a long time to come and that "we suffered, we struggled, we won" is "still a valid thesis." In fact, it is the only valid thesis of the class struggle.

This does not mean, however, that a fixed pattern can best express the dramatic values of the class struggle. On the contrary, by narrowing the forms of expression the danger is courted of narrowing also the content. The kind of simplification supplied by the "strike-formula" frequently leaves no room for other aspects of the class struggle.

Nor would I rule out the "strike-formula" under all circumstances (not after *Waiting for Lefty* and *Plant in the Sun*). In fact, it is only when a play is wanting in "character and atmosphere" as well as other essentials of the drama, that the "strike-formula" obtrudes itself as a formula. Granting the possibility of a great labor play within the framework of the strike-pattern, I still maintain that continued reliance on such a pattern has its danger of leading the dramatist into a rut.

I should insist on a distinction between the strike-novel and the strike-drama. In a novel the element of narration, description, and author's comment may go a long way in integrating the "formula" with character and milieu. To this extent it ceases to be a "formula." In drama, which is by its very nature "action literature" (plus stagecraft), the familiar pattern is apt to be more conspicuous and its repetition more annoying.

In the main, Lauer is right on so many points that I should hate to appear to be quarreling with him.

New York City. NATHANIEL BUCHWALD.

Exhibition of Jewish Culture

TO THE NEW MASSES:

MANY readers of the NEW MASSES will be interested in a brief explanation of the purpose of the exhibition of the art section of the Y.K.U.F. (World Alliance for Jewish Culture) now open to the public at 21 East 17 Street, New York City.

Last December a World Congress for Jewish Culture met in Paris. The best minds in literature, music, and art convened for the purpose of working out a unified program for bringing the arts to the Jewish people. Plans were laid to teach painting and music in Jewish schools and to publish books in the language the Jewish masses understand. Twenty-three lands were represented at the Congress, and committees were formed to carry out the work in each of them.

The art committee in New York has brought together over a hundred artists, many of whom are well-known in American art life.

New York City. FRANK HOROWITZ.

Frame-Up in Los Angeles

TO THE NEW MASSES:

READERS would probably like to know the outcome of the "Frame-Up in Los Angeles" which I wrote about in the issue of December 28. Those who read the article will recall that one Arthur Scott, alias Kent, was arrested for burglary, confessed his crimes, and alleged that Tom Johnson, local C.I.O. official, had been his accomplice in a series of burglaries, the process of which went into the Communist Party treasury. Johnson denied everything except that he had known Scott just after his release from San Quentin prison on an earlier rap; Scott had wormed his way into Tom Mooney's confidence while in prison and Johnson had met him in connection with Mooney defense work. The Communist Party denied it had benefited by Scott's burglaries and revealed that he had been expelled months before as a police spy.

Tom Johnson has been freed for lack of evidence against him. Scott has been sentenced to a term of from one to fifteen years in Folsom prison. The interesting thing, however, about this sentence is that Judge Clarence L. Kincaid gave this second-felony offender a lenient sentence "in appreciation for his patriotic service" in supplying information, as Aaron Sapiro, his attorney, admitted, against Harry Bridges. Just why his information against Bridges is to be considered more trustworthy than his evidence against Johnson, which the court considered worthless, does not appear. What *is* clear is that testimony against labor leaders, even if false, is regarded in California as "patriotic service" of a sort to win leniency for a self-confessed felon.

Los Angeles. ALFRED O'MALLEY.

Hearst's Treasures

TO THE NEW MASSES:

THE New York *Times* of Wednesday, March 2, 1938, carries an elaborate press release from King Features, one of the Hearst corporations, announcing the sale and donation of objects of art, tapestries, furniture, etc., from the private Hearst collection.

According to the story, Mr. Hearst, who is nearing seventy-five, desires to reduce the inheritance taxes which his estate will have to pay from the estimated $15,000,000 to a third of this sum.

The release continues that Hearst owns five warehouses full of the stuff in addition to his California castles, literally stuffed with art.

One of these warehouses, at 387 Southern Boulevard, in the Bronx, is a block square, and the November 6, 1937, *New Yorker* found it "as closely guarded as Sing Sing" by over thirty employees who have seen "a couple of churches and a castle carted in, piece by piece."

Recalling the analysis of the Hearst newspaper properties in my article in the NEW MASSES (February 8, 1938) the real reason for this sudden sale of objects of art becomes understandable.

For a man who has avoided some $5,000,000 in taxes in the past few years, the desire to escape inheritance taxes is not news. Nevertheless, I suspect that Heart is retrenching, because the difficulties with his newspaper and similar properties are pinching the shoe. Five warehouses, fully staffed, guarded, insured, etc., plus freightage, costs a pretty penny.

Abandoning art for art's sake, Mr. Hearst intimates, not merely his own demise, but also the decay of his fortunes, which may come to pass, even within his own lifetime.

New York City. JOSEPH STAROBIN.

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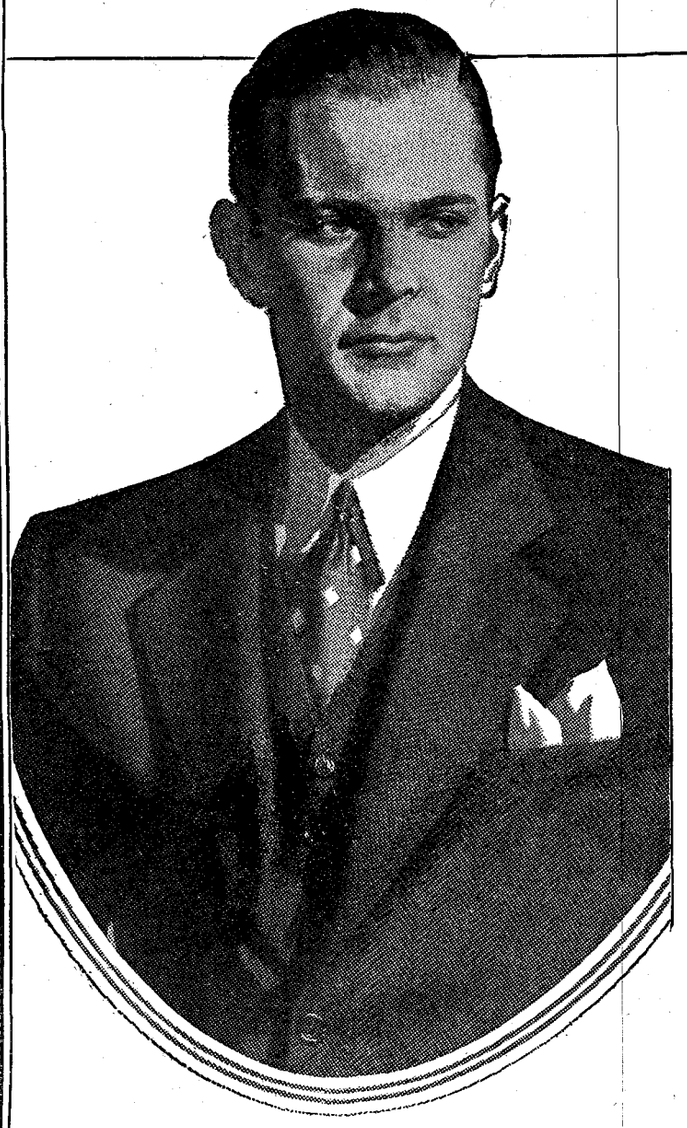

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BOOK REVIEWS

The Art of William Gropper

GROPPER. *A.C.A. Gallery Publications, 1938. $2.00.*

AN exhibition of paintings by William Gropper is an important event in American art, but on this occasion doubly so by virtue of the A.C.A. Gallery's issuance of a fine quarto volume containing an excellent selection of his drawings and paintings.

Introducing the reproductions is a brief biographical sketch by Herman Baron, which describes an amusing incident in Gropper's early development. A famous photographer was lecturing to the class, and in order to stimulate interest offered a prize for the best sketch of him by a student. Characteristically, Gropper drew a hand extended from behind a black cloth in the act of snapping a photograph. (P.S. He won the prize.)

This incident reveals one of the qualities that has made Gropper's name internationally famous as one of the great caricaturists of our time . . . an ability to seize upon the essentials of an object, a situation, or a social issue and set it down graphically with swift, telling strokes. His ability to compress rich and complex meanings into skillfully simplified symbols bespeaks not only a perceptive eye but a keenly perceptive mind. Years of training in the newspaper game, batting out a political cartoon to meet a deadline, have sharpened and developed his natural talents until he has few rivals in this field.

Within the last few years Gropper has devoted himself mainly to painting and has quickly established himself among the foremost of American painters. His present exhibition is largely the result of a trip through the West on a Guggenheim Fellowship last summer. Several of the canvases dealing with the devastations of the drought are among the finest paintings Gropper has yet achieved. In such works as "The Last Cow," "Waiting," "Drought," and "Dustland," he has expressed profound tragedy with a stark simplicity that is deeply moving. There are also several canvases dealing with various subjects such as the Spanish war, and with workers' struggles here, which are tellingly effective.

The exhibition as a whole is an advance in development over last year's, but perhaps not as much of an advance as we might wish for and reasonably expect. A number of weaknesses are still evident. The rapidity with which most of the canvases are produced is all too obvious in the manner in which the picture is executed. The carry-over from the cartoonist's technique is apparent. The outlines are filled in and touched up with a few darks and a few highlights. This is a great asset in the cartoon, when you've got to get an effect with as few means and in as little time as possible. But the canvas is another matter. There is no real need for haste, and the easel painting has a somewhat different function from that of the cartoon. The flatness of forms frequently results in a "thinness" that runs close to decorative superficiality. Occasionally figures or objects are little more than brush strokes or dabs of paint. There is no need for this because Gropper has given ample evidence of his ability to rise to great heights, and has already indicated in such a work as "The Last Cow," for example, that he can master the problem of craftsmanship. Here he has achieved an intensity of atmosphere, of realism of a kind that enhances and deepens the meanings of his statement.

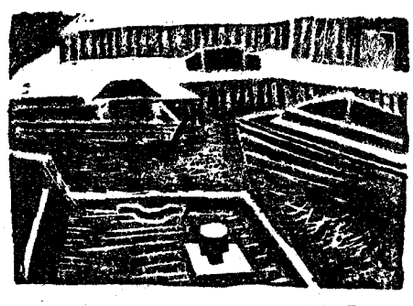
I would much rather see him develop eight or ten of these canvases to their full potentialities than thin his efforts out to cover twenty-five. Gropper has it in him to achieve the greatness of a Breughel, for he too sees with a clarity and imagination that are essential ingredients in great art. He can, if he chooses to, give us paintings as marvellously executed as they are brilliantly conceived. Gropper's ideas deserve fine execution. Take for example the canvas entitled "Waiting." The conception is worthy of a Goya. The picture of the vultures sitting on the slowly-dying cow, with others hovering about waiting for it to die, is the tragic statement of a man with deep human understanding and social vision. Only a man who stays right in the mainstream of life, right in the midst of the fight, can maintain such a record of sustained high achievement as is Gropper's.

STEPHEN ALEXANDER.

Spanish Prelude

MR. WITT AMONG THE REBELS, *by Ramon J. Sender. Translated from the Spanish by Sir Peter Chalmers Mitchell. Houghton, Mifflin Company.* $2.50.

THE cruel war in Spain may be said to have matured Ramon Sender as a writer. Under the impact of events, which conservative critics have deemed so harmful to creative talent, Mr. Sender has grown in subtlety and insight. Love of country has meant to him love of the soil, love of the people who till and mine and tread it. When these people, through resistance to oppression and demand for a better life, have shown what dignity and comradeship and self-sacrifice ordinary human nature is capable of, Mr. Sender has responded with increasing recognition.



Frank Davidson

In earlier books, such as *Seven Red Sundays* (which describes the beginning of the present struggle), Sender's democratic sympathies were concealed beneath an immediate consciousness of the futile and ridiculous individualism which the tradition of anarchism had bred in the Spanish workers. But the irony of *Seven Red Sundays* could turn toward laughter and away from tragedy because Sender found these people learning through the experience of defeat and death the necessity for discipline. When later his own participation in the war formed the narrative of *Counter-Attack in Spain,* irony gave way to a simple statement of events so profoundly moving that the terms of contemporary criticism are scarcely adequate. Historic process dictates the revival of terms long in disrepute. To speak of the "high seriousness" and the "epic intensity" of this narrative is only to recognize that the present bitter conflict in Spain has restored for the loyalists and all their friends in other countries the social basis of literature, the realization once more of the popular representative nature of art.

Mr. Witt Among the Rebels was written in 1935, and does not therefore reflect the present intensity of Mr. Sender's emotions. Since the novel describes an earlier Spanish revolt of 1873, the urgency of immediate events is also lacking, and Mr. Sender's irony flows in what for me is so thin and careless a spirit that the very idea of revolt becomes futile and histrionic. The official English policy towards Spain today may have suggested the theme. But Sender does not make Mr. Witt symbolic, and he is probably right, according to Marxist history, in considering English treachery less culpable at an earlier period. When Sender thinks of it in 1873, individualized in the person of a resident English engineer at Cartagena, his scorn gives way to the gentler rebuke of not finding Mr. Witt worth the expenditure of so much emotion. But this is also saying that Sender seems to need the stimulus of the immediate, and when he retires into history, finds himself unable to live up to the implications of his theme. It is difficult for the reader to become interested in the many details of a revolt from which Mr. Witt holds himself so studiously, though nervously aloof. Nor can he blame Mr. Witt for vacillation when the justification for the revolt of the canton against the Madrid government is never clarified and its failure is a foregone conclusion. So much ex-

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cuse for the irony of paradox paralyzes the judgment and leaves the reader a liberal like Mr. Witt himself. But the final paradox comes when, after Mr. Witt's instinctive treachery to the cause his Spanish wife holds so dear, Sender pushes *her* sense of irony to the point where she accepts her husband's conduct as though she had been expecting it and proceeds to conceal it with the same alacrity she has been bestowing on a better cause.

Mr. Witt has, in fact, been twice guilty of treachery toward the Spanish rebels, his Spanish wife, and his own liberal asseverations. Once, years before, when he had been sent to aid in the release of a noted poet, his wife's uncle, who had been captured in an earlier uprising, his movement was so dilatory that a pardon arrived too late. And now, while his wife exhausts herself perparing food and hospital supplies, while Mr. Witt himself defends the rebels to impress the British consul with his superior knowledge and penetration, he is led by an obscure impulse to suggest to a traitor the blowing up of the battleship that carries the rebel leader. Mr. Witt does these things because his liberal opinions are in reality only a method for preventing a sense of guilt from embarrassing the core of selfish and complacent snobbery that governs him. But at the same time part of his selfishness involves a very biological fear of growing impotence in middle age. He was once afraid that his wife had had an affair with the poet. He now confuses her admiration for Colau as the heroic leader with a suspicion that his primitive virility may also be part of the attraction. In the larger sense these compensations for his fear of impotence are allied with his liberalism itself, which is a compensation for the impotence of his entire personality, his incompetence to play any other role than that of a well-greased cog in a bureaucratic imperialistic machine. But Mr. Sender's gaiety forbids his fulfilling these implications of his theme. Mr. Witt remains an eccentric, when we should have preferred, under the impact of contemporary events, to have found in his portrait a more serious indictment of "the white man's burden" in the high noon of British imperialism.

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Lincoln's Boswell

THE HIDDEN LINCOLN: *From the Letters and Papers of William H. Herndon. Edited by Emanuel Hertz. The Viking Press.* $5.00.

ONE turns with interest to a new volume concerning Lincoln, for his historical role acquires a new meaning today. The problems which faced him as the leader of a vast coalition in a revolution were of the kind that arise in every vital social transformation. The chief problem associated with Lincoln may be placed thus: what factors and influences were responsible for the great change in his policies from 1861, when he was ready to support an amendment perpetuating slavery within its old confines, to 1863, when he issued his Proclamation of Emancipation, the forerunner of the Thirteenth Amendment which abolished slavery forever?

Certainly, Herndon, who was Lincoln's law partner for twenty years immediately preceding his election to the presidency, should have been able to throw considerable light upon the political development of the emancipator. After the assassination of Lincoln, Herndon devoted his life to the collection of materials for a definitive biography. These materials, consulted by every biographer of Lincoln, proved to be the principal source of information about his early life. Yet, there always was an atmosphere of mystery around this collection and rumors of "great truths" which could not bear the stark reality of the printed page. At last we have these papers, selected and edited by Emanuel Hertz, himself a biographer of Lincoln. His purpose, he tells us, is to rehabilitate the slandered Herndon.

Besides some occasional materials of real historic interest, most of the letters and documents in this volume concern themselves with an attempt to establish the illegitimate paternity of Lincoln, the unhappy state of his marital life and the fact that at one time he wrote an atheistic book which was burnt in manuscript by a friend. If this is what Hertz means by the "Hidden Lincoln," this reviewer can understand why biographers have either ignored these particular contributions of Herndon or given them only passing mention.

Herndon was an abolitionist who realized that the "great rebellion ended as a glorious revolution." Unfortunately, he had no real historical or political discernment, permitting himself to be shunted up a side-alley of moralistic and metaphysical speculations about Lincoln. It is even more unfortunate that particularly at this time, Hertz should choose to revive the Herndon speculations by publishing his papers. He has centered attention upon purely personal and secondary matters, when the main concern, in view of present developments, should be to clarify Lincoln's political role. The amazing change in Lincoln during the Civil War was the apex of his career and this alone made him great. As it is, the book has already been seized upon by some reviewers and feature writers, just as Herndon's insinuations were utilized previously, to obscure the real meaning of the man.

However, some documents of greater value are included. Such, for example, is the letter of J. Gillespie in which he informs Herndon that:

> Mr. Lincoln had more respect for and confidence in the masses than any statesman this country has ever produced. He told me in the spring of 1864 that the people were greatly ahead of the politicians in their efforts for and confidence in putting down the rebellion. He said the government had been driven by the public voice into the employment of means and the adoption of measures for carrying on the war which they would not have dared to put into practice without such backing.

This statement seems authentic enough, having in mind that the transformation of the war into an abolitionist war was caused largely by the swelling popular sentiment for emancipation, for the arming of the Negroes and other revolutionary measures. Herndon helps to round out this aspect of Lincoln's political character by recalling that the President once told him: "I claim not to have con-

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trolled events, but confess plainly that events have controlled me."

Leonard Swett, one of Lincoln's chief political counsellors, wrote that Lincoln managed his politics "by ignoring men and ignoring small causes but by closely calculating the tendency of events and the great forces which were producing logical results. In his conduct of the war he acted upon the theory that but one thing was necessary, and that was a united North. He had all shades of sentiment and opinions to deal with, and the consideration was always presented to his mind: How can I hold these discordant elements together? Hence in dealing with men he was a trimmer and such a trimmer the world has never seen. . . ."

These are certainly pertinent comments and need to be taken into consideration when forming an estimate of Lincoln's role in the great revolution which overthrew the slavocracy. It is indeed to be regretted that little of this kind of data is to be found in the volume. As a whole, Hertz should have pondered carefully the advice of Grant Goodrich, a friend both of Herndon and Lincoln. "You are the last man," he wrote Herndon, "who ought to attempt to write a life of Abraham Lincoln."

JAMES S. ALLEN.

Civil War Romance

ACTION AT AQUILA, *by Hervey Allen. Farrar and Rinehart.* $2.50.

THE year is 1864. Colonel Nathaniel Franklin, commanding the 6th Pennsylvania Cavalry in the Shenandoah Valley, refuses in the name of chivalry to carry out army orders to burn the home of Major Douglas Crittendon, a prominent and very troublesome Confederate officer. When, later, the major's widow, Elizabeth Crittendon, retreats with her family to a mountain cabin, the colonel sends her supplies from the stores of the Union Army, visits her in the intervals of his military duties, and eventually marries her. Two minor love stories run parallel to the major theme.

This book is history through the small end of the telescope. The nation and its future, democracy and its fate, the Negro people and their destiny—all these shrink to the smallest visible proportions. Against the background of these trivial—although occasionally annoying and importunate—social issues, loom the figures of Mr. Allen's love story. The war is of significance only as it brings couples together or parts them.

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victory for any side is a defeat for every side," says Colonel Franklin, and to someone who asks, "What do they go on fighting for?" he answers: "Heaven only knows!"

This lack of historical direction is the more disappointing because here and there appear —but only to be canceled out almost at once —passages of penetrating social analysis, doubly convincing since they are not superimposed upon the story, but are woven inextricably and inoffensively into its pattern.

Thus Colonel Franklin, ending his leave in the North, rides across the Mason-Dixon line:

> There was no doubt that he was in Maryland. If his frayed map hadn't told him, his ears and eyes would have. That subtle something that makes it unnecessary to pick things up for a long time, if ever, that permits the chickens to wander and the dogs to become legion, had even here, in the far western and mountainous portion of the "Old Line State," cast a certain oblique and faintly visible reflection of . . . decrepitude and slavery over the countryside.

And the old Pennsylvania judge, Bristline, subtly but vividly defines the American slave system as an anachronism when he describes a brief raid by Lee's soldiers into Pennsylvania:

> Why, they seemed to have come out of the past. It wasn't that they were in Pennsylvania that was so astonishing. It was that they were in the present. Talk, clothes, manners, the way they acted was, well, it was colonial! They seemed like so many yesterdays trying to palm themselves off as the heirs of tomorrow. Time itself seemed to be against them. They were surprised and discouraged already. There were more men about than they'd ever seen before. The most prosperous towns most of 'em had ever seen, and farms like they hadn't dreamed of.

But then, quickly, the war again becomes meaningless and futile, "an irrational enthusiasm that had resorted to force."

Action at Aquila is such a fragile and charming little story; one feels like the merest pedant to be impelled to protest against its inversion of social and historical values. Elizabeth Crittendon is beautiful, well-mannered, urbane—surely the reviewer is a contemptible fault-finder who must record that she is also a slaveholder on a large scale, and feels the most aristocratic disdain for poor whites, whom, before the upheaval of the Civil War, she "would not have permitted . . . to be at home on her property or even to be discussed in her presence." And why, in reading of Colonel Franklin's gallant assistance to the Confederates, need one recall uncomfortably that it was officers of Franklin's stripe (is General McClellan his prototype?) who, by their chivalry to the enemy, their reluctance to deal decisive blows against the rebellion, their ties of *esprit de corps* with Confederate officers and their families, their contempt for the Negro people, their indifference to the larger social and economic issues of the war, prolonged a struggle that might have been sharp and brief?

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SIGHTS AND SOUNDS

Regionalism in the Drama

AS a regionalist, Lula Vollmer is a jealous guardian of the southern mountains with the simple folk ways, proud traditions and queer notions of the mountaineers. Her intimate knowledge and sympathetic understanding of the mountain folk make her something of a specialist in the field, but when she tries to superimpose general ideas upon her regional milieu, the result, at least in the case of *The Hill Between* (at the Little Theatre), is disappointing and inconclusive.

In her masterpiece, *Sunup,* there was something valid and socially important in the clash between the sturdy spirit of independence of the mountaineers and the oppressive forces of the law. In her new piece, the clash is between intangibles: the mystic something that stands for spiritual grandeur of the hills, on the one hand, and the loud, vulgar, and footloose manners and ethics of civilization, to the north of the southern mountains, on the other. From the very first act one is dismayed by a sneaking suspicion that the regional dramatist is trying to peddle a spurious and reactionary thesis: the superiority of backward "natural" life over modern American civilization and "larning." And even if this thesis is introduced slyly and in combination with less objectionable ingredients, one still is wary of Miss Vollmer's glorification of the mountaineer *mores,* since it carries with it the philosophy of regional isolation and insulation from outside influences. Though such things as poverty, oppression, and class distinctions are discreetly left out in *The Hill Between,* one feels that Miss Vollmer is inclined to defend her mountaineer South *in toto.* And one almost wishes that the sweet fragrance of her mountain air would become polluted by the miasma of *Tobacco Road,* so as to get a better feel of the real thing.

The authenticity of milieu and character do not mix well with Miss Vollmer's ideology in this particular piece. It may be true that a kiss on a moonlight night is taken very seriously up yonder in the mountains, while to the mundane lady from New York it is just another kiss in the moonlight, but this does not prove that "larning" plays havoc with moral values or that inarticulate mountain folk are given to fine-spun mystic philosophizing. The author of *The Hill Between* is kidding us or herself when she endows the tight-lipped Julia of the mountains with such a gift of literary gab when Miss Vollmer needs it for stage effect.

Mixed up with the mystic power of the mountains is the perfectly normal and decent desire on the part of the young physician to settle among his own folk and practice medicine where it can do most good. The theme of the country doctor, though frequently sentimentalized, is a healthy social theme nonetheless, part of the American tradition and surely a fitting motif for a regional drama. But the physician in *The Hill Between* has been put under the spell of Miss Vollmer's mystic mood and nebulous thinking. He, too, begins to feel that he should never have left the mountains in the first place and that he could never be himself in the world of pavements and "larning." Indeed, his return to New York (at the bidding of Julia who loves him and who philosophizes to the effect that the greatest fulfillment is self-denial) takes on the character of banishment from the land of superior moral values.

There is little in the acting or production to make this play distinguished. By now, Broadwayites have got used to the argot of the folk drama and the stage effects that go with it. The square dance in the second act furnishes a bit of good and well-staged entertainment, its value being enhanced by the fact that it is well integrated with the play. Sara Haden's Julia is properly mountaineer (even if the author makes her speak the God-awfulest arty lines), Philip Ober is good up to the point when he begins to recite his mystic sentiments, and Lili Zehner is as sweet a mountain maiden as you might wish to see in the hills of Times Square. The heathen land of "larning" does get an even break in Dorothy Patten's lady from New York. She would be coarse and commonplace even in the vulgar world beyond Miss Vollmer's mystic mountains.

In sum, the author of *Sunup* is still a regional specialist, but beyond milieu and *mores* she has little to give us in *The Hill Between,* and what she offers by way of ideas rings with reactionary overtones.

Percy Bysshe Shelley may have had an intellectual crush on William Godwin, and his social ideas no doubt were influenced by the writings of the older philosopher, but by the verdict of time it is the pupil and not the teacher that matters. Accordingly, one felt considerably let down by *I Am My Youth* (closed after eight performances at the Playhouse), where Godwin was the protagonist and Shelley merely a minor character.

Nor was this the only disappointing feature of Ernest Pascal's and Edwin Blum's "biographical drama." A literary and literate piece, it frittered away both an interesting theme and a fascinating name. When Shelley burst in upon the sedate philosopher full of magnificent indignation against child labor in the coal mines of Wales, one was thrilled by this challenge to the entrenched forces of exploitation. But instead of developing this exciting theme, the authors of *I Am My Youth* shifted the emphasis upon Godwin and the contradiction between his preachment and his deeds. The advocate of reason (as opposed to social convention) saw his own house tumble about his ears precisely as a result of applying

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Haiti (Lafayette, N. Y.). Rex Ingram plays the lead in this stirring tale of how one of Toussaint L'Overture's generals foiled Napoleon's attempt to restore slavery in Haiti.

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The Cradle Will Rock (Windsor, N. Y.). Marc Blitzstein's anti-fascist play, using music and satire as implements in the people's fight. (Closes, April 2.)

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his own moral principles. Broken and dispirited, he made a feeble gesture of continued fidelity to his ideals, but by that time the audience hardly cared what Godwin was going to do, for the exciting initial theme had been lost sight of and the play as a whole had gone to seed. Shelley's return upon the scene toward the end of the last act was to no purpose at all, and his reiteration of the original theme —the intellectual battle against the Malthusian theory as the ideological foundation of poverty and child labor—was weak and perfunctory.

Having run around in circles of domestic woes and contradictions between reason and emotion, the drama did not end, it merely stopped. Scholars may find fault with the play on the score of biographical authenticity, but rank-and-file playgoers found it futile and pointless as drama and only mildly effective as theater. For while literary English was spoken with dignity and grace in this literary piece, in its acting it was untouched by imagination or subtlety of character portrayal. Frank Lawton was properly romantic as the impetuous youthful Percy, but for all he revealed of Shelley the poet, he might have been the tenor of a romantic operetta. Charles Waldron as Godwin was of a piece with his lines —uninspired and uninspiring. Linda Watkins had a good scene as the bewildered Fanny Wollstonecraft Godwin when she discovered that Godwin was not her father. The direction of Alfred de Liagre Jr. was in the best of taste and the settings and costumes of Donald Oenslager were agreeably in period.

There was a whiff of the intellectual storm and stress of the early nineteenth century in this play but no more than a whiff. Of a play dealing with the age of Shelley and Byron one reasonably had a right to demand more.

NATHANIEL BUCHWALD.

Longeverne vs. Velrans

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The worst disgrace for a captive is to have his buttons, belt and suspenders removed, a code of war which brings a martial economy of its own. Replacement buttons become stores of war and Lebrac, the general of Longeverne, is inspired to send his hordes into battle entirely nude.

The parents of the infant *conditiori* finally come together against the common plague and a great lovefeast is arranged in the marketplace of Velrans. The kids forget their hostilities immediately. But, lo, a Velrans and a Longeverne father break out in the ancient grudgefight and soon the square is a shambles of embattled parents. The children look on in amazement and the warrior Le Crique observes that his contemporaries are likely to be just as stupid when they grow up.

It takes an elastic imagination to see this as an anti-war satire. It is rather a superb study in child psychology. To the French, children are not so much embryo adults as they are spontaneous citizens of nature, Rousseau's noble savages with an up-to-date touch of anarcho-syndicalism. Their special world ends with grownup responsibilities and they become the objects of little Le Crique's wonderment and pity. To paraphrase Robert Frost's dictum on realism, the French take the kid with the dirt on. Hollywood covers him with greasepaint. Whether this is good child psychology I cannot say, but as a movie technique it has made the French recognized masters of the child picture. From *La Maternelle, Poil de Carotte,* and *Sans Famille,* to Jean Renoir's touching child sequences in *People of France,* they have been the most delightful of movies. I am a special admirer because I am always amazed that children of such tender years can speak French.

Serge Grave, more gangly than we saw him with the great Robert Lynen in *Sans Famille* a few years ago, plays Lebrac, the generalissimo of Longeverne. With a face like a sensitive ferret, this *formidable* actor commands the complete attention of the audience. The other tots are some professional but mostly volunteers from the town of location. The picture is poetically photographed among the mountains, gorges and deep field grass of Languedoc, where the bucolic forays of Longeverne and Velrans take a natural place.

The *Big Broadcast of 1938,* at the Paramount, N. Y., is not much better than its predecessor, *Joe Miller's Jests of 1739,* and that only because W. C. Fields was born since then. The producers will have to answer to the Hell Gate Chapter of the W. C. Fields Boys Club for the shameful things they make our idol say and do.

A pious sociological study of monastic routine in a Trappist monastery and in the Hospice of St. Bernard in the French Alps is being shown at the Squire, N. Y. In *Monastery,* the interesting things for this very lay brother were the black-robed monks of St. Bernard, with snow-goggles and the famous dogs, whizzing about on skiis on their errands of mercy. When they recover an avalanche victim, the body is placed in a special vault

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underground to await identification by relatives in the summer. The camera remains in this strange guest room for some chilling footage. The English narrative is by the Rev. M. J. Ahearn, whose expository remarks will please connoisseurs of the medieval.

For those who can hold their breath for an hour until the worm turns, *Love, Honor and Behave* (Warners) is the prescription. Wayne Morris is the slowly revolving worm who got that way from a bad home life, explained in great detail. This is one of those 1922 to 1937 tours with a stopover for the '29 crash. Priscilla Lane, a lively new ingenue, is the provocation for the customary Morris punch which lands on Dick Foran and later on the little lady herself. Mr. Foran doesn't have his horse for a getaway. Neither did I, but I managed.

Bette Davis's hussy characterization has been firmly set down in an ante-bellum tragedy of New Orleans in *Jezebel,* newly installed at the Music Hall. Miss Davis has her heart set on Henry Fonda, and her machinations cause several deaths by duel and much heartbreak. Bette's only rival in causing wholesale misery is the yellow fever epidemic of '52.

George Brent is a local good-time Charley who is used by Bette to make Fonda jealous. All poor George gets is a couple slugs "in the tripe" to use his own cheerful expression. The research is admirable; the lines are very accurate, the acting is not to be quarreled with; and the picture is made up of quite logical developments. But, somehow there is a singular lack of feeling, with Miss Davis's jitterbug style of cattiness worked overly hard. The trio of adapters of Owen Davis's original have shown great concern with the material but, for all their vigilance, *Jebezel* demonstrates that a watched plot never boils.

JAMES DUGAN.

Disks from "Pins and Needles"

AT last the commercial recording companies begin to wake up to the fact that there's a musical smash hit around town, and *Pins and Needles* gets their tardy attention.

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vocals. (Starred artists' names are members of the Labor Stage cast.) Now the ice has been broken, there are sure to be further releases. "Death in the Afternoon," which Rome presented at the NEW MASSES concert, would be swell recording material, too, and speaking of that, when are we going to get some disks from *The Cradle Will Rock* and *I've Got the Tune?*

The best-seller in the recent popular lists is the colored envelopeful of *Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs* excerpts put out by Victor. Several dance bands have also recorded the principal tunes, but the three Victor disks are dubbed from the actual sound track of the film. They make a good set for those who have seen the film, but (except for the dwarf's yodel song) they don't stand up too well by themselves.

The only records which I've found really exciting are two by Duke Ellington (Brunswick), back in top form again, which is to say —conservatively—incomparable. The "New Black and Tan Fantasy" and "Stepping Into Swing Society" is one of his best disks in years, and not far behind comes "Black Butterfly," coupled with "Harmony in Harlem." The new version of "Black and Tan" offers a fascinating comparison with the original, which I first remember hearing on a Brunswick disk by the Washingtonians (Ellington's first band) in 1926. I can't say that the new setting is any better than the old: it lacks some of the latter's audacity; but it is even more ingeniously scored, and it is played and recorded to perfection. ROY GREGG.

Ted Shawn: A New Trend

TED SHAWN met Ruth St. Denis and with her founded the Denishawn School from which came three of the more important leaders in the modern dance field. The Denishawn School was inspired by the Orient, especially its philosophies; its dancing was theatrical, mystic. With the years, it retreated, moved further into the mystical and esoteric attitudes which Ted Shawn varied with sentimental victorianisms and narcissus-like glorifications of the male. Definitely, there was a reactionary overtone in the work of the school, directly in line with the developing expansionist policies of the country's imperialist interests.

However, Ted Shawn has yet to write the last chapter of his biography. He is in New York, now, with his men dancers, presenting a series of five Sunday night concerts at the Majestic—and writing a new emphasis into his work. Judging from *O Libertad,* the dance "saga" presented in the first of these concerts, Ted Shawn is not likely to move out of his exoticisms, nor far from his firm, honest, but simple belief in moral persuasion as a prime force for good—but *O Libertad* comes directly out of Whitman and in this new dance, Shawn is concerned for the first

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time with the liberty of men; not as the democratic Whitman was concerned, surely, but as one who is for the first time discovering undemocratic repressions.

In the first "act" of the rather loosely constructed episodic composition, *The Past,* the Aztec Emperor tears the heart out of an unfortunate "bearer of bad tidings," a religious penitent is crucified, peons are enslaved and beaten. The only positive note is the swing-your-partner folk dancing of the forty-niners in a "Goldrush Camp."

The second act presents the regimentation of men into the imperialist war of 1914-18, "No Man's Land," a satiric "Return of the Hero" (crippled), a decadent "Jazz Decade," a rather ghastly but sentimental "Depression," a golden-boy fantastic "Recovery," and a "Mobilization for Peace." The last act, titled "Kinetic Molpai" and representative of the future, is a suite of eleven abstract patterns all by itself.

Ideologically, it is perfectly obvious that Ted Shawn is groping, a bit confusedly, for a clearer picture of the world he lives in. The dance saga lacks the cohesion that comes of a surer understanding of the dancer's materials. There is oversimplification of the good as well as the evil forces, especially the good, and there is never any really profound analysis of the subject at hand.

The nearest Shawn comes to a satisfactory presentation is in his treatment of the "lost generation" decadence: the night club, the jazz band, the crap game. His section on the future is in the manner of a technical show piece, interesting enough, but scarcely bearing any relationship to the preceding sections, or to the future. His "Mobilization for Peace" is a study in athletic estheticism. And this, too, is logical, that Shawn's future should deal in abstract and mystic sensualisms; his "past" and "present," with all their pantomimic directness, have little to do with reality.

But Ted Shawn has yet to write the last chapter of his career. Perhaps nothing more startling will come. Still, we have seen one more of the pioneers of dance in America move out into the fight for democracy.

OWEN BURKE.

★

Forthcoming Broadcasts

(Times given are Eastern Standard but all programs listed are on coast-to-coast hookups)

American School of the Air. American Merchant Marine boys will be interviewed in a vocational guidance program, Fri., March 18, 2:30 p.m., C.B.S.

"Carmen." The Metropolitan Opera Co. presents Bizet's opera, with Bruna Castagna, Susanne Fisher, Helen Olheim, Rene Maison, Sat., March 19, 1:55 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

"The Master Builders." A Federal Housing Project program, Sat., March 19, 6:15 p.m., N.B.C. blue.

Modern Age Books. Tickets to Fortune dramatized Sat., March 19, 9:30 p.m., WABC.

Rep. Wright Patnam. The Democrat from Texas will talk on "The Chain Store Bill," Sat., March 26, 10:45 p.m., C.B.S.

Dr. Thomas Parran. The U. S. Surgeon-General will speak on a Negro Education Week program, Mon., March 28, 2:30 p.m., N.B.C. red.

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ANNA LOUISE STRONG, just arrived from battle-fronts of China, speaks on "China's Awakening" this Thursday, (March 17) at Washington Irving High School, 16th St. & Irving Pl., 8:45 p.m. Wm. E. Dodd, Jr., Chairman. Ausp.: A.F.S.U. Adm. 25c; Reserved 40c.

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